



3rd INTERNATIONAL NURSING CONFERENCE 2024

28th NOVEMBER 2024

PROCEEDINGS

**“Nursing Beyond the Tradition: Advancing
Healthcare through Integration of Health
Informatics”**

Organized by :

**FACULTY OF NURSING
UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO
SRI LANKA**



3rd International Nursing Conference

“Nursing Beyond the Tradition: Advancing Healthcare through Integration of Health Informatics”

PROCEEDINGS

FACULTY OF NURSING
UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO

2024



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Message from the Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo



It is my immense pleasure to convey a message as the Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo for the 3rd International Nursing Conference, organized by the Faculty of Nursing, University of Colombo. First and foremost, I would like to warmly welcome all participants to the 3rd International Nursing Conference (INC-2024), which is one of the satellite conferences under the Annual Research Symposium (ARS 2024) of the University of Colombo. I strongly believe that this 3rd international conference will enhance the quality of research and foster international collaborations aimed at strengthening nursing research and practice. Research plays a pivotal role in improving the outcomes of institutions as well as the development of the country. Therefore, research outcomes must be critically evaluated, with suitable solutions and recommendations considered after constructive discussions and arguments.

The theme of the conference, “**Nursing Beyond the Tradition: Advancing Healthcare through Integration of Health Informatics,**” reflects the integration of modern technology into healthcare to enhance its role in the global healthcare workforce and improve quality. This conference is enriched by invited speakers and innovative researchers from a multidisciplinary team related to healthcare delivery.

I am confident that this conference will advance the objectives of the Faculty of Nursing and contribute to establishing it as an excellent academic and research center at the University, producing high-quality nursing graduates worldwide. Additionally, INC-2024 offers an excellent platform for establishing strong collaborations with globally recognized institutions to address issues and develop effective, practical solutions for the continued improvement of the Faculty of Nursing.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to the keynote and plenary speakers, reviewers, sponsors, and participants. I also thank the organizing committee and all staff members of the Faculty of Nursing for their efforts in organizing this international conference. I wish everyone the very best.

Senior Professor (Chair) H.D. Karunaratne

Vice Chancellor

University of Colombo

Sri Lanka



Message from the Dean, Faculty of Nursing



It is a great pleasure to write this message on the occasion of 3rd International Research Symposium, 2024 of the Faculty of Nursing University of Colombo Sri Lanka under the theme of “Nursing Beyond tradition: Advancing Health care through integration of health Informatics”. Conducting a Research Symposium annually in the faculty is a regular event in the academic calendar of the faculty, and it has been a great success during past six years with high quality research presentations and participation of academics, undergraduates, and scientists from different universities and research institutions. The 3rd international research symposium 2024 has a special significance this year as the theme of the symposium is very relevant to the current health care landscape as health care is being digitalized globally with new inventions and innovations. In addition to that, for the second student group of the faculty of nursing who passed out recently present their research projects at this symposium. I strongly believe that 3rd international research symposium would be a very successful event as this time we have organized two technical sessions and the number of abstracts have been increased and therefore more scientific dialogues are expected to occur.

The proceedings of this year symposium consist of research abstracts presented by 41 researchers including research outputs of the graduates of the faculty nursing. The quality of the abstracts has been maintained by reviewing thoroughly and assessed by a panel of academics. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the organizing committee of the 3rd international research symposium headed by Ms. Chandrani Herath, the chair of the 3rd international Research symposium and her active team for their commitment and hard work and all efforts to make this event a reality.

As the dean of the Faculty, I also wish to convey my sincere gratitude to the heads of the departments, academic staff, senior assistant registrar and non-academic staff of the faculty of nursing for extending their fullest support and corporation to show up the 3rd international research symposium. I also congratulate all the presenters who are presenting their research at this symposium. Special thanks to Vidya Jyothi Professor Vajira Dissanayake, the dean, Faculty of Medicine University of Colombo, the Keynote Speaker and all the plenary speakers of the 3rd international research symposium. I would like to place a special remark to Senior Professor (Chair) H.D. Karunarathne, Vice Chancellor University of Colombo for his moral support, visionary leadership, correct guidance and inspirations during the recent past for the development and smooth running of the faculty of nursing. I hope all the participants enjoy the glamor of the 3rd international research symposium in the Faculty of Nursing.

I wish the 3rd International research symposium 2024 would be a great success!

Professor S.S.P. Warnakulasuriya

Dean

Faculty of Nursing

University of Colombo

Sri Lanka

Message from Conference Chair - INC 2024



It is with great pleasure that I compose this message for the 3rd International Nursing Conference (INC 2024) organized by the Faculty of Nursing, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. The theme of this year's conference, "Nursing Beyond the Tradition: Advancing Health Care through Integration of Health Informatics," underscores the dynamic and evolving nature of our profession as we embrace new technologies and methodologies to enhance patient care.

This conference comes at a critical time when the healthcare industry is undergoing rapid transformation. The integration of health informatics into nursing practice is not just a trend but a necessity, offering unprecedented opportunities to improve healthcare outcomes, streamline processes, and provide more personalized and efficient care. As nursing professionals, we are at the frontline of this transformation, and our ability to adapt and lead in this era of digital health is crucial.

The collection of abstracts from this international conference reflects the breadth and depth of research and innovation in this field. It showcases the dedication and creativity of nursing professionals and researchers who are pushing the boundaries of traditional practice and exploring how health informatics can be leveraged to address the challenges of modern healthcare.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to all the contributors whose work is featured in these proceedings. Your research and insights are vital to the advancement of nursing practice and the betterment of patient care worldwide. I also wish to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the organizing committee, reviewers, and all those who have contributed to making this conference a success.

As you consider the content of this conference, I encourage you to consider how these innovative approaches can be applied in your own practice and research. Let us use this platform to share knowledge, foster collaboration, and inspire one another to continue advancing the nursing field beyond tradition.

Thank you for your participation, and I wish you a fruitful and inspiring conference experience.

Warm regards,

Mrs. H.M.C.M. Herath

Lecturer / Head,
Department of Clinical Nursing,
Chair, 3rd International Nursing Conference
Faculty of Nursing, University of Colombo

Message from Conference Secretary - INC 2024



It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I share this message for the 3rd International Nursing Conference (INC 2024), organized by the Faculty of Nursing, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, under the theme “*Nursing Beyond the Tradition: Advancing Healthcare through Integration of Health Informatics.*” I warmly welcome all participants to this significant event.

The theme emphasizes the evolving role of nursing in an increasingly digital healthcare environment. As we transition beyond traditional practices, the integration of health informatics has become essential in transforming healthcare delivery, improving patient outcomes, and advancing clinical decision-making. This conference provides a platform to explore how nursing professionals can utilize technology and data-driven practices to address healthcare challenges and shape the future.

INC 2024 aims to foster insightful discussions and knowledge exchange by bringing together distinguished experts, researchers, and scholars from local and global communities. The sessions mainly focus on how informatics can enhance nursing education, clinical practice, research, and policy-making, empowering healthcare professionals to lead in a technology-driven world.

Participants will benefit from pre-conference workshops, keynote addresses, invited speeches, and research presentations that highlight cutting-edge advancements in nursing and health informatics. We encourage active engagement in discussions, sharing of experiences, and building collaborations that will drive innovative approaches to patient care and healthcare delivery.

Further, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to our sponsors and organizing committee for their dedication and hard work in making this event possible. Special thanks go to Vidya Jyothi Professor Vajira H.W. Dissanayake from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo for his keynote address, and to all invited speakers for their contributions. We are confident that INC 2024 will provide a professionally enriching and memorable experience for all participants. Let us embrace the future of nursing by advancing healthcare through the integration of health informatics.

Dr. Thilina Lakmini Gunathilaka

Senior Lecturer (Gr.II)

Department of Basic Science and Social Science for Nursing

Faculty of Nursing

University of Colombo, Sri Lanka



Programme Outline

Programme of the 3rd International Nursing Conference

8.00 am- 8.30 am	Registration of the participants
8.30 am- 8.40 am	Inauguration of the 3 rd International Nursing Conference 2024 Lighting the Traditional Oil Lamp
8.40 am- 8.50 am	Traditional Cultural Dance
8.50 am- 9.00 am	Welcome Address Mrs. H.M.C.M. Herath, Chair, 3 rd International Nursing Conference, 2024
9.00 am- 9.10 am	Address by the Dean – Faculty of Nursing Prof. S. S. P. Warnakulasuriya
9.10 am- 9.15 am	Introduction to the Chief Guest by the Dean – Faculty of Nursing
9.15 am- 9.35 am	Address by the Chief Guest Senior Professor H. D. Karunaratne, Vice-Chancellor, University of Colombo
9.25 am- 9.30 am	Introduction to the Keynote Speaker Prof. S. S. P. Warnakulasuriya
9.35 am- 10.20 am	Keynote Speech Senior Professor (Chair) Vidya Jothi Vajira H.W. Dissanayaka, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo
10.20 am- 10.30 am	Vote of Thanks by Dr. Thilina Gunathilaka, Secretary, 3 rd International Nursing Conference 2024
10.30 am- 11.00 am	Refreshment
	Introduction to Plenary Speaker 01 Ms. Nilushi Nisansala
11.00 am- 11.30 am	Plenary Speech- 01 Associate Professor Lau Siew Tiang Lydia, Director of Education, National University of Singapore
	Introduction to Plenary Speaker 02 Dr. T.A. Asurakkody
11.30 am- 12.00 pm	Plenary Speech- 02 Professor Janet Davis, College of Nursing, Purdue University, Northwest
12.00 am- 12.45 pm	Lunch
12.45 pm onwards	Technical Sessions
3.30 pm – 4.00 pm	Awarding of Certificates for the presenters and closing remarks



Programme of the Technical Session

ORAL PRESENTATIONS- PANEL 01		
SN	Paper ID	Title and author/s of the paper
OP1.1	INC001	FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION AMONG POSTNATAL MOTHERS IN SELECTED MOH AREAS IN WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA <i>Ratnayake S.M.S., Nimeshika K.M.H., Senevirathna S.P.T.A., Tharuka D.S., Karunathilaka M.A.N., Wijewardhana S.H.M.P.E.H., De Silva T.R.U. Haq M.R.I., Gunathilaka T.L., Herath H.M.C.M.</i>
OP1.2	INC002	READINESS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SIMULATION- BASED LEARNING AMONG NURSING EDUCATORS IN STATE UNIVERSITIES OF SRI LANKA <i>Perera K. S. I., Gamage P. M. W., Jayarathna G. H. E., Vithusha U., Madhushani J. V. P.A., Sanjeevani W. U., Atputharajah A., Sujana M. F., Priyadarshani U. G. N., Nisansala M. W. N.</i>
OP1.3	INC015	EFFECT OF NURSE LED EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION ON PREVENTION OF POST-OPERATIVE COMPLICATIONS AND FUNCTIONAL OUTCOME AMONG PATIENTS PLANNED TO UNDERGO TURP: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY <i>Mohd.Parvez, Kalal Nipin, Singh Mahendra, Sharma Khina</i>
OP1.4	INC036	LEVEL OF STRESS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY AMONG NURSES AT A SELECTED HOSPITAL IN SRI LANKA <i>Dharmasena N.W.K.U., Piyachandra G.K.P.R., Oshadi N.L.C., Chandrakanthi., Liyanage N.T.W., Thilakarathna H.M.C.R.K., Nisansala M.W.N.</i>
OP1.5	INC037	ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND PAIN AMONG ORTHOPEDIC PATIENTS IN A SELECTED HOSPITAL IN MATARA SRI LANKA <i>Thshari N.A.J.T., Ediriwickrema E.A.L.O, Tharanga N.A.J.T, Madumali B.L.M., Renuka K.G., Kariyawasam K.H.A.Y., Nisansala M.W.N.</i>
OP1.6	INC040	ATTITUDES TOWARD EPISIOTOMY CARE AMONG POSTNATAL MOTHERS AT TEACHING HOSPITAL MAHAMODARA Gunerathna K.M.M.U., Karunanayaka A.D.S.S., Mudalige T.



ORAL PRESENTATIONS- PANEL 02		
SN	Paper ID	Title and author/s of the paper
OP2.1	INC020	IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS AND ITS ASSOCIATED FACTORS AMONG NURSES ON PATIENT CARE AT THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL, SRI LANKA <i>Maduwanthi R.W.W.M.L., Rathnayaka T.B.H.B.P.S., Sandamali A.W.R., Madushani W.A.N., Anuradha P.V.S., Hansini K.H.C., Warnakulasuriya S.S.P.</i>
OP2.2	INC025	QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AT THE “AYATI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES” IN RAGAMA <i>Dias H.V.S.N.S, Dias H.V.H.N.K., Perera M.A.W.N., Hewagama W.D.M., Senanayake K.I.D.F., Munidasa K.G.P.K.</i>
OP2.3	INC026	QUALITY OF LIFE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS IN ADULT CANCER PATIENTS AT APEKSHA HOSPITAL, MAHARAGAMA, SRI LANKA: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY <i>Varatharaja M., Almeida P.D.K.N., Fasleem M.M., Ibbas A.N.F., Madhurangi W.G.M., Padmasiri B.K.H.N.K., Sandamali M.V.I., Siyam S.M., Priyadarshani U.G.N., Edirisinghe N.P.</i>
OP2.4	INC033	KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND PRACTICES ON FOLLOWING STANDARD PRECAUTIONS FOR CONTROL HOSPITAL-ACQUIRED INFECTIONS AMONG HEALTHCARE SUPPORTIVE STAFF IN DISTRICT GENERAL HOSPITAL HAMBANTOTA, SRI LANKA <i>Nilanthi P.O.A., Priyadarshani D.D.S., Nanayakkara M.P., Ramani B.A.P., Samaraweera N., Karunarathna T.P.N.P., Lakshmi M.P.D.S., Perera A.C.H.</i>
OP2.5	INC034	EXPLORING FACTORS AFFECTING DIGITAL HEALTH CAPACITY AMONG NURSES IN SRI LANKA <i>Madhuwanthi R.M., Jayathilake M.R.S., Liyanaarachchige N.P., Marasinghe R.B.</i>
OP2.6	INC042	NURSES’ ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE TOWARDS POSTOPERATIVE PAIN MANAGEMENT AT COLOMBO NORTH TEACHING HOSPITAL – RAGAMA <i>Rupasinghe K.N.M., Deshanthi N.A.K.S., Thanthiriarachchi K.A.D.M.C., Wickramrachchi W.C.S.W., Wijesinghe K.A.D.D., Thilakarathna H.M.C.R.K., Kanchana K.T.G.</i>
OP2.7	INC043	FAMILIARITY WITH DIGITAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES AND THEIR APPLICATIONS AMONG NURSING OFFICERS AT COLOMBO SOUTH TEACHING HOSPITAL(CSTH), SRI LANKA <i>Hansadee H.M.T., Kanchana F.K.T., Kumarasiri H.P.S., Nilanka M.M., Helamini R.P.I., Madhuwanthi R.M., Amarasekara A.A.T.D.</i>



ORAL PRESENTATIONS- PANEL 03		
SN	Paper ID	Title and author/s of the paper
OP3.1	INC006	<p>THE PREVALENCE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS RELATED TO THE EXCESSIVE USAGE OF DIGITAL SCREENS IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN THREE SELECTED DIVISIONAL SECRETARIES IN SRI LANKA</p> <p><i>Sewwandi G.V.H.H., Kaushike S.H.D., Tharushika A.W.S., Rupasinghe G.G.P.P., Nirmani G.W.A.D., Herath K.M.A.P., Wijewickrama L.S.W.A.P.P., Devani M.W.C.A., Menike W.A.R.P., De Silva H.R.T.</i></p>
OP3.2	INC007	<p>AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION OF SPIRITUAL CARE AMONGST STUDENT NURSES IN SELECTED COLLEGES OF NURSING - WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA</p> <p><i>Ranaweera R.A.N.D., Samarasekara P.W.G.D.P.</i></p>
OP3.3	INC016	<p>KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND PRACTICES TOWARDS HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV) INFECTION, CERVICAL CANCER, AND HPV VACCINATION AMONG ANTENATAL CLINIC ATTENDEES IN THE HOMAGAMA MOH AREA, SRI LANKA</p> <p><i>Danthanarayana L.U., Rangana P.G.C., Gunasinghe U.D.I.U., Nilaxsan TI, Kaluarachchi H.C., Wijekoon W.M.R.S., Thanusan G., Senevirathna M.A.G.C., Malkanthie M.G.A.S., Edirisinghe N.P.</i></p>
OP3.4	INC023	<p>ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND BODY IMAGE SATISFACTION AMONG PATIENTS DIAGNOSED WITH CUTANEOUS LEISHMANIASIS IN A SELECTED HOSPITAL IN ANURADHAPURA DISTRICT, SRI LANKA</p> <p><i>Hettiarachchi H.A.S., Disanayake D.M.S., Chandradasa C.P.P., Chandrasena D.M.S.N., Nauka P.G.N., Kariyawasam K.H.A.Y., Meegoda M.K.D.L.</i></p>
OP3.5	INC035	<p>ASSESSMENT OF DIETARY PATTERNS AND ITS ASSOCIATED FACTORS AMONG PATIENTS WITH CKD ATTENDING NEPHROLO CLINIC IN A SELECTED HOSPITAL IN SRI LANKA</p> <p><i>Padmarani R., Malkanthi N.W.L.I.U., Gunathilaka N.C., Weerakoon G.K.G., Samarawickrama P.M., Edirisuriya M.D., Hansini K.H.C., Senarath N.S.A.S.N.</i></p>
OP3.6	INC039	<p>THE PREVALENCE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS OF DIABETIC PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY AMONG PATIENTS ATTENDING TO THE DIABETIC CLINIC IN TEACHING HOSPITAL KARAPITIYA, SRILANKA</p> <p><i>Gamage D.W.G.D.M., Jayasekara D.K.R., Imesha B.T., Ruvindi Y.P.W., Madushani K.W.A.K., Thilakarathna H.M.C.R.K., Nisansala M.W.N.</i></p>



ORAL PRESENTATIONS- PANEL 04		
SN	Paper ID	Title and author/s of the paper
OP4.1	INC003	SPOUSAL SUPPORT ASSOCIATED WITH PRIMI MOTHERS' SATISFACTION DURING PREGNANCY: A STUDY IN TISSAMAHARAMA MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH (MOH) AREA <i>Nilmini J.W.A.T., Shiromala H.D.T., Indu J.K.R., Dulanji L.M.H., Fernando W.I.S., Madhavi A.V.P.</i>
OP4.2	INC009	IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON BEHAVIORAL CHANGES AMONG ADOLESCENTS ATTENDING CHILD GUIDED CLINIC IN DISTRICT GENERAL HOSPITAL, HAMBANTOTA <i>Ediriweera, S.N.J., Dewasirinarayana, W.T.M., Madushika, I.G.S & Sriyani, K.A.</i>
OP4.3	INC010	ATTITUDES AMONG THE MOTHERS REGARDING THE ORAL HEALTH OF THEIR CHILDREN: A HOSPITAL-BASED STUDY <i>Chathurika, B.A.C., Kalpage, N.M., Priyadarshani, P.H.N., Manawaduge, S.L., & Sriyani, K.A.</i>
OP4.4	INC017	KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES TOWARDS FOOT SELF-CARE AMONG PATIENTS WITH DIABETES MELLITUS ATTENDING ALL BASE HOSPITALS IN COLOMBO DISTRICT <i>Ruwaranga G.M., Nisansala J.B., Hettiarachchi M.C., Kavindi A.D.K., Sisudan S., Priyashan M.G.G.P., Dilhani M.A.C., Kamshiga T., Shopijen E., Kaushalya K.A.D.S., Kisokanth G.</i>
OP4.5	INC018	PREVALENCE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS OF POLYPHARMACY AMONG THE ELDERLY IN CARE HOMES IN COLOMBO DISTRICT, SRI LANKA <i>Madhushara J. M. S. I., Indunil W. A. M., Sanjeewanee S. B. M. D.P., Sooriyaarachchi A. I., Venuri L. K., Perera J. K. M. S., Atheep U. L., Fazil I. L. M., Elvitigala D. A. S., Amarasinghe T.S.</i>



POSTER PRESENTATIONS PANEL 01		
SN	Paper ID	Title and author/s of the paper
PP1.1	INC022	ATTITUDES TOWARDS SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AMONG EXPECTED MOTHERS AND THEIR PARTNERS DURING THE ANTENATAL PERIOD IN KATANA MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AREA <i>Manishka H.A.S., Abeygunasekara T.U.W., Nanayakkara P.M.</i>
PP1.2	INC027	PROCRASTINATION AMONG NURSING STUDENTS IN SRI LANKA <i>Ekanayake J., Tennakoon N., Jegatheeswaran I and Lagoshan.</i>
PP1.3	INC028	TREATMENT ADHERENCE AMONG PATIENTS DIAGNOSED WITH HYPOTHYROIDISM: A HOSPITAL-BASED CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY <i>Hathurusinghe H.M.S. and Rodrigo M.</i>
PP1.4	INC029	HEALTHCARE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE <i>Denuwan M.K.K., Bandara K.H.D., Balasooriya V.J.L., Poojathmi R.D.D., Lagoshan L.</i>
PP1.5	INC030	PERCEPTIONS OF AI-DRIVEN PERSONALIZED STUDY PLANS AMONG NURSING STUDENTS OF A SELECTED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTE <i>Perera O., Fernando K.H.E., and Lagoshan L.</i>
PP1.6	INC031	KNOWLEDGE ON HAND HYGIENE MEASURES AMONG FOOD HANDLERS IN KOGGALA FREE TRADE ZONE <i>Jayadeepa R.Y.W.B., Abeyegunasekara T.U.W., Chandrasiri P.A.A.</i>



POSTER PRESENTATIONS PANEL 02		
SN	Paper ID	Title and author/s of the paper
PP2.1	INC008	<p>KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND PRACTICES ON EPILEPSY MANAGEMENT AMONG STATE SECTOR FINAL YEAR DIPLOMA NURSING STUDENTS IN WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA</p> <p><i>Balasooriya B.P.G.H.D., Gunasekare M.K.C.P., Jayawikrama L.K.R.N., Rajawardhana R.W.M. R.V., Sankha N.D.K.R.S., Sumanarathna K.M.D.T. P., Wannakuarachchi S.I., Senarathne H.S., Asurakkody T.A.</i></p>
PP2.2	INC011	<p>KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES REGARDING THE PREVENTION OF THALASSEMIA AMONG PARENTS OF THALASSEMIC CHILDREN AT THE NATIONAL THALASSEMIA CENTER, KURUNEGALA, SRI LANKA</p> <p><i>Rambukwelle G.B.H.Y, Weerakkodi W.A.R.K., Chathuranga M.M.D.R.M., Gunasinghe A.N.S., Sumanasekara M.G.D.U., Premakumara G.A.S., Ubhayawardana D.L.N.L.</i></p>
PP2.3	INC019	<p>DOMESTIC FALLS AND INJURIES AMONG ELDERLY PATIENTS ADMITTED TO BASE HOSPITAL, THISSAMAHARAMA: A RETROSPECTIVE CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY</p> <p><i>Kumara D.D.G.J., Pushpa kanthi T.G.N., De Mel W.T.D., Nilmini D.R., Srimali, E.P.U.I., Rathnakumari, K.N., Perera A.C.H.</i></p>
PP2.4	INC021	<p>KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS TOWARDS STOMA CARE AMONG SURGICAL NURSES IN TEACHING HOSPITALS IN COLOMBO DISTRICT</p> <p><i>Uthpala U.H.T., De Silva D.K.M., Kaushalya K.A.D.S., Dharmartahne E.A.H.U., Senanayake K.I.D.F., Assuakkody T.A.</i></p>
PP2.5	INC032	<p>AWARENESS OF DENTAL FLUOROSIS AMONG PARENTS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN IN DIMBULAGALA EDUCATIONAL ZONE</p> <p><i>Pathirana W.P.T.D., Imendra K.G and Dias M.P.H.K.</i></p>
PP2.6	INC038	<p>KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES OF LABOR PAIN MANAGEMENT AMONG MIDWIFERY QUALIFIED NURSES AT A SELECTED HOSPITAL IN SRI LANKA</p> <p><i>Lakmali M.G.T., Wijesiri M.D.P.N., Pathiranawasam G.S., Nruthyanjalee K.N., Nadeesha K.K.D., Thilakarathna H.M.C.R.K., Kanchana K.T.G.</i></p>
PP2.7	INC041	<p>NURSES' KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE OF ORAL CARE GIVEN TO ICU PATIENTS AT NATIONAL HOSPITAL SRI LANKA</p> <p><i>Kulathunga K.M.A.E., Surandika M.A.T., Wickramasinghe D.T.S., Indumini H.M.U., Damayanthi P.D.D., Thilakarathna H.M.C.R.K., Kanchana K.T.G.</i></p>



Introduction To Keynote Speaker

Vidya Jyothi Professor Vajira H.W. Dissanayake

MBBS(Colombo), PhD. (Nottingham), FNASSL, FIAHSI

Chair & Senior Professor of Anatomy

Department of Anatomy, Genetics & Biomedical Informatics

Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka



Professor Vajira H. W. Dissanayake is the Dean of the Faculty and the Chair and Senior Professor of the Department of Anatomy, Genetics, and Biomedical Informatics of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo. He is the current President of the Sri Lanka Medical Council and the Registrar of the Ceylon Medical College Council. He has held many leadership positions in the field of medicine including being the President, Sri Lanka Medical Association; President, Commonwealth Medical Association; President, Health Informatics Society of Sri Lanka; President; Asia Pacific Association for Medical Informatics; Vice President, International Medical Informatics Association; and Founder Chairperson, Commonwealth Centre for Digital Health. He has authored 178 papers in peer reviewed journals with an h-index of 24, i10 index of 80, and a citation count of 2838. In recognition of his scientific achievements, he was elected a Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences of Sri Lanka, a Fellow of the International Academy of Health Sciences Informatics, and a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. He was conferred the Sri Lankan national titular honour of Vidya Jyothi in 2019 by His Excellency the President on the recommendation of the Sri Lanka Medical Association.



Abstract of the Keynote Speech

Advancing Healthcare through Integration of Digital Technologies, Data Sciences and Artificial Intelligence

The integration of digital technologies, data sciences, and artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare represents a transformative shift towards more efficient, personalized, and accessible medical services. This talk would explore the potential of these technologies to revolutionize various aspects of healthcare, including diagnostics, treatment, patient management, and operational efficiency. Digital technologies such as electronic health records (EHRs), telemedicine, and wearable health devices enable the seamless collection and analysis of patient data, facilitating real-time monitoring and early detection of health issues. AI algorithms, particularly in machine learning and natural language processing, enhance diagnostic accuracy, predict patient outcomes, and personalize treatment plans by analyzing vast datasets and identifying patterns beyond human capability. Moreover, AI-driven automation can streamline administrative tasks, reduce errors, and lower costs, allowing healthcare professionals to focus more on patient care. The talk would also address challenges such as data privacy, ethical considerations, and the need for robust regulatory frameworks. By leveraging the power of digital technologies, data sciences, and AI, the healthcare industry can achieve significant advancements in delivering quality care, improving patient outcomes, and increasing accessibility, ultimately transforming the future of healthcare.

Abstract of the First Plenary Speech

Shaping the Future of Healthcare: Integrating Nursing with Health Informatics

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Integrating nursing with health informatics is increasingly essential as healthcare systems adopt technological advancements to improve efficiency, patient outcomes, and care delivery. In a global context, health informatics operates at the intersection of healthcare, information technology, and data science. This integration enables real-time decision-making, predictive analytics, and streamlined care processes.

For nursing, this integration signifies a transformation of practice, expanding the role of nurses beyond bedside care to include data management, digital communication, and the use of health information. The combination of nursing and health informatics profoundly impacts various aspects of healthcare, such as patient-centred care, interprofessional collaboration, and data-driven policymaking. Nursing professionals must embrace new roles as informatics specialists and digital healthcare advocates. They will ensure that technology aligns with patient care principles and that the human touch in healthcare is preserved. The future of healthcare depends on the successful integration of technology into nursing practice, facilitating systems that are efficient, patient-centered, and sustainable. As the largest workforce in healthcare, nurses are crucial in shaping this future, ensuring that as technology advances, the essence of compassion in care remains unchanged.



AI Healthcare Policy: Personal to Global

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The World Health Organization (WHO) (2021) encourages countries to build a nursing workforce equipped with artificial intelligence (AI) healthcare practice competencies. AI is capable of learning and is equipped with self-correcting abilities to improve accuracy based on feedback. AI health technologies include virtual avatar apps, smart homes, predictive analytics, virtual or augmented reality, and robots. Rapid developments in the field have produced an environment of disruptive change. The foundational ethics of the nursing profession are key for navigating in this environment.

This presentation considers the importance of developing a personal policy for AI healthcare along with guidance for contributing to policy development for AI in nursing. Generative AI, telehealth, and AI humanoid robots are used to illustrate practice issues. The future is already here for AI healthcare and the time for nurses to act with reason and integrity is now. But where do we start?

Leadership for decision-making about AI health technologies starts with a nurse's personal policy on access and use of personal health data in generative AI. This step is followed by clinical practice regulatory policy using the International Council of Nurses (ICN) ethical standard 1.3 "Nurses ensure that the individual and family receive understandable, accurate, sufficient and timely information in a manner appropriate to the patient's culture, linguistic, cognitive and physical needs, and psychological state on which to base consent for care and related treatment" (p. 7).

Lack of telehealth availability related to a nation's technology infrastructure results in discrimination. To change this, "Nurses advocate for equity and social justice in resource allocation, access to health care and other social and economic services" (p. 7). Cybersecurity is a pressing problem in telehealth, raising critical issues regarding privacy, consent, and transparency. "Nurses hold in confidence personal information and respect the privacy, confidentiality and interests of patients in the lawful collection, use, access, transmission, storage and disclosure of personal information" (p. 7). How does the nurse uphold this standard when a patient's personal information is being transmitted and analyzed in a cloud service hosted by a third-party provider?

Global nursing staff shortages, pandemics, and the world's aging population are drivers for the development of AI humanoid robots. The *Code of Ethics for Nurses* specifically includes robots. Element 1.11 states: "Nurses ensure that the use of technology and scientific advances are compatible with the safety, dignity and rights of people. In the case of artificial intelligence or devices, such as care robots or drones, nurses ensure that care remains person-centered and that such devices support and do not replace human relationships" (pg. 8). This emphasis reinforces the importance of steering AI practice policy with professional ethics.



In summary, this presentation offers a brief description of AI capabilities and nursing policy along with guidance from the ICN *Code of Ethics for Nurses*, the standard for global policy.

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Technical Session – Oral Presentations



FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION AMONG POSTNATAL MOTHERS IN SELECTED MOH AREAS IN WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA

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Introduction: The changing role of motherhood poses emotional and physical challenges for women, often leading to postpartum depression (PPD), a common psychiatric condition post-childbirth that impacts mothers' mental health, child development, and family dynamics. Recognizing risk factors is crucial for mitigating its effects. In Sri Lanka, there is limited research on these associated factors, particularly in the MOH areas of the Western Province.

Objectives: The purpose of this study was to identify factors associated with PPD among post-natal mothers in selected MOH areas in the Western Province, of Sri Lanka.

Methods: Mothers between 1- 6 months postpartum were selected using simple random sampling and screened for PPD with a cut-off mark of 9 or more using the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EDPS). Potential associated factors were assessed through an Interviewer-based questionnaire and past medical records. The association of factors with PPD was examined through Pearson correlation and Pearson Chi-square using SPSS version 27.

Results: A total of 422 mothers from selected 10 MOH areas, from all three districts in Western Province. The mean EPDS score among the sample was 5.41. Significant factors associated with PPD included the newborn's age ($p=0.001$), partner support ($p=0.001$), in-law support ($p=0.001$), socio-economic level ($p=0.005$), sleep duration during antenatal ($p=0.002$) and postnatal periods ($p=0.001$), satisfaction with postnatal sleep ($p=0.003$), and satisfaction with breastfeeding ($p=0.006$). Positive correlations were found between EPDS scores and both the duration of newborn hospitalization and the initiation time of breastfeeding. Negative correlations were observed with the newborn's age, maternal age, parity, socio-economic level, sleep duration in antenatal and postnatal periods, frequency of breastfeeding, and the age of the breastfeeding baby.

Conclusion: The present study findings underscored the significance of addressing postnatal mental health concerns and associated factors. To mitigate PPD and improve maternal well-being, efforts should focus on spreading awareness, screening, offering support, addressing financial issues, promoting breastfeeding, teaching good sleep habits, advocating for supportive policies, and researching new treatments.

Keywords: Associated factors, Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale, Postpartum, Depression, Postnatal Mothers



READINESS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SIMULATION- BASED LEARNING AMONG NURSING EDUCATORS IN STATE UNIVERSITIES OF SRI LANKA

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Introduction: The integration of Simulation-Based Learning (SBL) in nursing education is increasingly adopted worldwide to address various challenges faced by nursing undergraduates. The successful implementation of SBL to the nursing curricula hinges on the readiness of nursing educators, making the assessment of their readiness crucial.

Objective: To assess the readiness for the implementation of Simulation-Based Learning among nursing educators in state universities of Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 86 nursing educators from seven state universities in Sri Lanka using total population sampling. Data was collected using a pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire developed by the researchers. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: socio-demographic information and readiness towards SBL. Readiness was assessed in three dimensions: self-readiness, institutional readiness and technological readiness, using section-wise mean values. Scores were categorized as Not ready: 0-19, A Little: 20-38, Somewhat: 39-57, Moderately: 58-76, Very Much: 77-95. Descriptive statistics were performed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (Version 27) with statistical significance set at 0.05. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo.

Results: Most participants were females (83.7%, 72), between 31-40 years (39.5%, 40) and senior lecturers (36.0%, 31). Overall, a majority of the participants (58.1%, 50) were moderately ready to implement SBL. Participants exhibited average self-readiness with a mean of 19.40±4.74, but perceived high institutional readiness and high technological readiness as indicated by mean values of 26.94±6.15 and 16.43±3.89 respectively.

Conclusions: Nursing educators are moderately ready to implement SBL in the nursing curricula, demonstrating a willingness to adopt this teaching method. Therefore, initiating SBL implementation appears feasible. However, to ensure successful integration, targeted interventions to enhance educators' self-readiness, institutional readiness and technological readiness are recommended. This approach will support the effective incorporation of SBL into nursing education in Sri Lankan state universities.

Keywords: Nursing education, Readiness, Simulation-Based Learning, Sri Lanka



OP1.3: INC015

EFFECT OF NURSE LED EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION ON PREVENTION OF POST-OPERATIVE COMPLICATIONS AND FUNCTIONAL OUTCOME AMONG PATIENTS PLANNED TO UNDERGO TURP: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

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Introduction: Benign prostatic hyperplasia is an age-related prostate enlargement that causes urinary problems, affecting 15% to 60% of men over 40 and up to 60% by age 90. Transurethral resection of the prostate is a common surgery to treat BPH and can lead to complications such as erectile dysfunction and urinary symptoms. A lack of postoperative knowledge and regular follow up can affect quality of life and normal urinary functions. Therefore, nurse led education is crucial for effective management and prevention.

Objective: This study was carried out to investigate the effect of nurse led educational intervention on prevention of post-operative complications and functional outcome among patients planned to undergo TURP.

Methods: A quasi-experimental post-test-only study was conducted among 60 TURP patients in tertiary care hospital at Jodhpur, divided into experimental (n=30) and control (n=30) groups. The experimental group received nurse-led educational interventions, while the control group received routine care. Data were collected at 4th and 8th weeks post-TURP using a postoperative checklist, IPSS (international prostate symptom score), and IIEF (international index of erectile function), with validated reliability (Cronbach's α : IPSS = 0.91, IIEF = 0.82). Ethical approval to conduct the study was taken from institutional ethics committee (AIIMS/IEC/2023/5728). Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS v20, with a significance level of $p < 0.05$.

Result: In the experimental group, IPSS scores were lower (9.9 ± 4.6) than in the control group (15.6 ± 5.8) ($p < 0.001$) indicating improved symptoms. Additionally, IIEF scores were higher in the experimental Group (3.5 ± 1.2) than in the control group (2.6 ± 1.18) ($p < 0.004$), suggesting improved erectile function with nurse-led intervention. Post-operative urinary incontinence rates were significantly lower in the experimental group at 4 weeks after TURP ($p = 0.001$).

Conclusions: Recent changes emphasize the importance of nurse-led education for post-TURP patient's, improving outcomes and reducing complications. Prioritizing comprehensive health education by nurses is essential for optimizing recovery in these patients.

Key-words: Nurse led educational intervention, TURP, BPH, IPSS, IIEF



OP1.4: INC036

LEVEL OF STRESS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY AMONG NURSES AT A SELECTED HOSPITAL IN SRI LANKA

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Introduction- The prevalence of overweight and obesity among healthcare professionals, particularly nurses, is a global concern. Nurses play a critical role in healthcare delivery and promoting healthy lifestyles among patients. Stress, a common occupational hazard in healthcare settings, have been linked to various adverse health outcomes, including overweight and obesity. These conditions impact the personal health of nurses, affect their ability to provide optimal care to patients and their credibility in promoting healthy behaviors.

Objectives: To assess the level of stress and its relationship with their Body Mass Index (BMI) among nurses at teaching hospital, Rathnapura in Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 272 nurses at the Teaching Hospital Rathnapura in Sri Lanka. Self-administered Perceived Stress Scale (PSS10) was used to assess the stress level. BMI was calculated by measuring the nurses' height and weight before the questionnaire was administered. Data was analyzed using SPSS V21.0

Results: Among 272 participants Majority were Female (93%, n=253), Aged 31-40years (40.1%, n=109), employed in surgical wards (30.5%, n=83), height 150cm-159cm (66.2%, n=180) and Weight 51-70Kg (62.1%, n=169). According to BMI 37.9% (n=103) were overweight and 19.1%(n=52) were obese. According to PSS scores the majority (66.5%) had moderate perceived stress while (22.1%) had high perceived stress and (11.4%) had low perceived stress. The association between the level of Stress with BMI were significant at, $\chi^2(8, N=272) = 56.40, p = 0.000$. Cramer's V was 0.322.

Conclusions: A significant proportion of the participants were either overweight (37.9%) or obese (19.1%), with many experiencing moderate (66.5%) to high (22.1%) levels of stress. Findings suggest that stress management is essential for addressing overweight and obesity among nurses. It is recommended that targeted interventions, including stress reduction programs, healthy lifestyle promotion, regular health monitoring, and creating a supportive work environment, be implemented to improve the overall health and well-being of nurses, ultimately enhancing patient care quality.

Keywords: Overweight, Obesity, Nurses, Perceived Stress



ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND PAIN AMONG ORTHOPEDIC PATIENTS IN A SELECTED HOSPITAL IN MATARA SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Orthopedic injuries significantly impact patients' physical and psychological well-being, often resulting in severe pain and a range of mental health challenges. These injuries, which commonly stem from incidents like road traffic accidents and falls, contribute substantially to global morbidity. Understanding the anxiety, depression, and pain experienced by orthopedic patients is crucial for improving recovery outcomes and enhancing their overall quality of life.

Objective/s: To assess the anxiety, depression, and level of pain among orthopedic patients in General Hospital in Matara, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 200 patients diagnosed with major orthopedic injuries at the Orthopedic unit, General Hospital, Matara using the convenient sampling method. Data was collected using an interviewer-administered questionnaire, including the validated tools of Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) and Visual Analog Scale (VAS) and analyzed using SPSS software version 26.

Results: Among the 200 patients, the majority were male n=113 (56.5%) and above 20-40 years old (n=102, 51%). The mean age was (32 ±10) years. Majority were admitted due to Road Traffic Accidents (RTA) (n=168, 84.0%) and right lower limb n=94 (47.0%) was the most common affected body part. The mean total depression and anxiety levels were 6.22 ± 1.838 and 6.22 ± 1.883 respectively. Moreover, n=17 (8.5%) had depression and n=20 (10.0%) had anxiety. The mean pain value was 4.40 ± 1.417 and the majority n=127(63.5%) experienced moderate pain. Furthermore, there were statistically significant and positive correlations between pain (p= 0.000), level of anxiety (p= 0.000), and level of depression (p= 0.000).

Conclusion/s: In conclusion, the study underscores the strong and statistically significant correlations between pain, anxiety, and depression, highlighting the importance of addressing these interrelated issues in patient care. Recommendations include targeted mental health support and pain management, road safety programs to reduce orthopedic trauma, and regular psychological assessments to ensure comprehensive patient care.

Keywords: anxiety, depression, patients, orthopedic



ATTITUDES TOWARD EPISIOTOMY CARE AMONG POSTNATAL MOTHERS AT TEACHING HOSPITAL MAHAMODARA

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Introduction - Episiotomy is a surgical incision performed during childbirth to widen the vaginal opening. Understanding attitudes toward episiotomy care is crucial for enhancing patient-centered care, developing effective postpartum recovery protocols, and improving evidence-based practices.

Objectives-To assess the attitudes towards episiotomy care among postnatal mothers at Teaching Hospital Mahamodara

Method - A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 206 postnatal mothers with episiotomy at postnatal wards at Teaching Hospital Mahamodara. The participants were recruited via convenience sampling method. Interviewer-administered, pre tested questionnaire was used to collect data. Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 used to analyze the data in terms of descriptive statistics and Chi square test. Level of attitude on episiotomy care in postnatal mothers was assessed from 9 questions in the questionnaire. One mark was given for each of the correct best answer and zero mark was given to each of the wrong answer and for no idea response. A participant can obtain of maximum of nine marks for the questionnaire and minimum of zero marks according to the scoring method. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethical Review Committee, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Ruhuna. (Reference No. - 175.11.2022)

Results- A considerable proportion of postnatal mothers (40.3%, n=83) completed education up to GCE O/L. Notably, a significant proportion of mothers (68.9%, n=142) were unemployed. The majority of mothers (51.5%, n= 106) strongly agreed that they would like to have their episiotomy treated properly. However, it was also revealed that most mothers (33%, n= 68) sometimes experience fear when handling the episiotomy area by them. The majority of maternal figures (43.7%, n= 90) they believed that an episiotomy impacts on uncomfortable during the intercourse in future. A significant number of mothers (60.7%, n= 125) believed that the care provided for an episiotomy significantly affects the wound healing process. A higher number of mothers (50%, n = 103) reported they are confident regarding their ability to care for episiotomy wounds properly. The larger portion of mothers (43.7%, n= 90) were unaware of how to properly assess an episiotomy wound for signs of infection. The greater part of the mothers (51.5%, n= 106) agreed that the episiotomy cut during labor made childbirth process simple.

Conclusion- These findings suggest significant gaps in postnatal mothers 'knowledge and confidence about episiotomy care, particularly in assessing wound for infection and understanding how it impact on sexual functions. While most of mothers recognize the importance of proper wound care, a lack of awareness and fear of handling episiotomy site still exist. Additionally, the data also revealed the necessity of focused educational programs that address the psychological as well as the physical aspect of episiotomy management. Improving post natal education and strength wound care practices and overall health outcomes for mother.

Key words- Postnatal mothers, Episiotomy care, attitudes



OP2.1: INC020

IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS AND ITS ASSOCIATED FACTORS AMONG NURSES ON PATIENT CARE AT THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL, SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Psychological stress is a condition of mental distress characterized by symptoms of anxiety and depression. Nurses, in particular, experience heightened levels of stress compared to other healthcare professionals, due to the dynamic and demanding nature of their role.

Objective: The study aimed to assess the level of psychological stress and its associated factors among nurses towards patient care in National Hospital, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A total of 338 randomly selected nurses from Medical wards, Surgical wards, Accident service, Cardiology, Orthopedic, Neurology wards, Neuro-trauma unit (ICU nurses included to the relevant ward total) of National Hospital, Sri Lanka were recruited as the study sample for this descriptive cross-sectional study. Information on socio- demographic, level of stress and associated factors towards patient care were gathered by using a validated and pre-tested self- administered questionnaire. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 25. Descriptive Statistics such as frequencies, means and standard deviation were used to describe the characteristics of the sample and associations between variables were assessed by inferential statistics. Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from Ethics Review Committee at KIU (KIU/ERC/24/059).

Results: The mean age was 32.9 ± 8.07 years and ages ranged from 20-45 years old. The majority were Female (63.5%, n=217), Sinhalese (94.4%, n=323), and educated up to diploma level (90.6%,n=310). A higher proportionate was having the work experience ranging from 5 to 15 years (49%, n=168). The overall mean stress score was 24.55 ± 8.54 . The majority of nurses reported moderate stress (64.1%, n=216). There was a statistically significant, association between the level of stress and their residence ($p=0.002$), working unit ($p=0.047$) and work experience ($p=0.032$).

Conclusion: The majority of nurses reported a moderate level of perceived stress. Major determinants of the stress were residence, work unit and experience. Policymakers and hospital administrators should prioritize addressing the stress levels among nurses and develop appropriate programs to manage and mitigate stress effectively.

Keywords: Psychological Stress, Associated Factors, Nurses, Patient Care, National Hospital Sri Lanka



QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AT THE “AYATI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES” IN RAGAMA

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Introduction: Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is characterized by persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, including deficits in social reciprocity and nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction. Since there is no complete cure for ASD, raising children with autism poses challenges to the quality of life (QOL) of their parents.

Objective: To assess the Quality of life among parents of children with Autism attending the ‘Ayati National Centre for Children with Disabilities’ at Ragama.

Methods: A quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at the Ayati Centre, Ragama after obtaining ethical approval from the Ethics Review Committee (ERC) of The National Hospital of Sri Lanka (NHSL). A sample of 180 parents of children aged 3-12 years, diagnosed with autism by a pediatrician or neurologist and confirmed by a clinical psychologist, was recruited for the study using convenience sampling. WHOQOL-BREF self-administered questionnaire was used to assess the QOL. The WHOQOL-BREF scoring involves summing the item scores within each domain (Physical, Psychological, Social, Environment), reversing scores for negatively phrased items, and transforming the raw domain scores to a 0–100 scale, where higher scores (>50) indicate better quality of life. Collected data was analyzed with SPSS v.29 using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage distribution) and inferential statistics (ANOVA).

Results: Most of the participants (52.8%) represented the age category of 30-40 years. The majority were mothers (85%) and 15% were fathers. The mean scores for the WHOQOL-BREF domains were: Physical Health (M = 64.09, SD = 24.35), Psychological Health (M = 41.78, SD = 16.02), Social Relationships (M = 47.91, SD = 16.14), and Environment (M = 43.28, SD = 19.16). In the physical domain, the QOL of parents in the age group 30-40 yrs showed a higher mean score (27.90±40972), than age > 40yrs (18.39±8.329). An ANOVA revealed significant differences in the Physical Health domain across the above age groups (F= 33.736, p < 0.001).

Conclusion: Overall, parents of children with autism reported a good quality of life in the physical domain, however, improvements are needed in environmental, psychological, and social aspects. It is recommended that psychological and social support services for all age groups be enhanced, with a particular focus on parents over 40 years old, to improve their physical well-being through targeted health and wellness programs.

Keywords: Quality of Life, Parents, Autism, WHOQOL-BREF



QUALITY OF LIFE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS IN ADULT CANCER PATIENTS AT APEKSHA HOSPITAL, MAHARAGAMA, SRI LANKA: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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Introduction: Cancer is a prevalent and debilitating disease that significantly impacts patients' Quality of Life (QOL). A comprehensive understanding of QOL and its associated factors is crucial for improving the well-being of cancer patients.

Objective: Determine the QOL and identify factors associated with QOL among adult cancer patients attending Apeksha Hospital, Maharagama, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive, cross-sectional study comprising consecutively recruited 309 adult cancer patients at Apeksha Hospital, Maharagama was conducted. Validated Short Form Brief Pain Inventory and the European Organization for Research and Treatment of Cancer QOL C30 (version 3) Questionnaire measured pain and QOL, respectively. Data analysis was performed using, descriptive statistics, chi-squared test, logistic regression analysis, Spearman's correlation analysis ($p < 0.01$), and a confidence interval of 95% considered.

Results: The mean QOL score was 54.0 (SD = 23.9), the mean functional score was 66.4 (SD = 21.3), and the mean symptoms score was 32.6 (SD = 20.1). Notably, The items with the highest mean scores, indicating greater impairment, were 'Trouble doing strenuous activities' (M = 2.62, SD = 1.02), 'Trouble taking a long walk' (M = 2.47, SD = 1.00), and 'Need to stay in bed or a chair during the day' (M = 1.79, SD = 0.77). There was a significant association between monthly household income and stage of cancer with QOL ($p < 0.05$). Pain level exhibited statistically significant negative correlations with QOL score ($r = -0.144$, $p < .01$), functional score ($r = -0.210$, $p < .01$), and positive correlation with symptoms score ($r = 0.209$, $p < .01$).

Conclusion: Participants experienced moderate impairment in QOL especially with physical activities. Lower-income and advanced cancer stages were associated with lower QOL. Higher pain levels were associated with lower QOL and increased symptom severity indicating the impact of pain on overall well-being.

Keywords: Associated factors, Cancer pain, Functional capacity, Symptom severity, Quality of life



KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND PRACTICES ON FOLLOWING STANDARD PRECAUTIONS FOR CONTROL HOSPITAL-ACQUIRED INFECTIONS AMONG HEALTHCARE SUPPORTIVE STAFF IN DISTRICT GENERAL HOSPITAL HAMBANTOTA, SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Hospital-acquired infections (HAIs) remain a crucial global health problem, significantly affecting patient safety by contributing to prolonged hospital stays, increased morbidity, mortality, and additional financial burden. Healthcare workers play a critical role in infection prevention, but knowledge gaps exist, especially among support staff.

Objective: The study aimed to assess the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of following standard precautions for controlling hospital-acquired infections among healthcare supportive staff in District General Hospital Hambantota, Sri Lanka.

Method: A quantitative descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted including 255 healthcare supportive staff selected by using simple random sampling. Data were collected using a pretested, validated researcher developed self-administered questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics with SPSS software. Operational definitions of KAP of the study population were assessed by using adapted blooms cutoff points. Ethical approval was obtained from KIU ERC (KIU_ERC_24_165).

Results: This study revealed a high level of knowledge (mean score 13.73 out of 16) and positive attitude (mean score 35.29 out of 40) among supportive staff regarding HAI prevention. However, there were 62% always dispose of sharps in a safe box, while the least proportionate wears PPE at all the times (23%). A high mean score (30.96) indicates that, in general, staff are fairly diligent in adopting infection prevention practices, but there is room for improvement to achieve the highest possible adherence.

Conclusion: Despite high levels of knowledge and positive attitudes, gaps in infection control practices highlight the need for comprehensive training programs, improved guideline dissemination, regular audits, and fostering a safety culture among the health supportive staff.

Keywords: Hospital-acquired infections, healthcare supportive staff, knowledge, attitudes, practices



OP2.5: INC034

EXPLORING FACTORS AFFECTING DIGITAL HEALTH CAPACITY AMONG NURSES IN SRI LANKA

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Introduction: As first-line healthcare professionals, nurses ought to be capable of utilizing digital technologies in the rapidly growing digital age. Nurses' capacity to effectively utilize digital health is influenced by numerous factors. However, this area has not been adequately addressed in the Sri Lankan context.

Objective: The current study aimed to explore factors affecting the digital health capacity among nurses in the state health sector in Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive qualitative study was conducted among purposively selected 42 participants including nurses, nursing educators, nursing administrators, collaborative healthcare workers, and digital health implementors in both the state health sector and nursing education in Sri Lanka. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews utilizing an interviewer guide. Thematic analysis was performed ensuring its trustworthiness. The ATLAS.ti version 24 was used to analyze the data. Ethical approval was obtained from ERC, USJ(Ref.17/21) and other relevant authorities.

Results: Four main themes were derived with ten subthemes; i. Person-related factors (Cognitive factors, Psychological and Behavioral factors) ii. Educational and training (Opportunities, Nursing curricula development) iii. Organizational/Social and environmental oversight (Infrastructure and resources, Working conditions, Digital health interventions, Health governance, Sociocultural influences), and iv. Ethical and legal compliance. Additionally, recommendations were derived based on the participants' insights to address these influences to enhance digital health capacity among nurses.

Conclusion: The findings highlight the diverse influences that affect the digital health capacity of nurses emphasizing the need for comprehensive strategies to address them. Thus, developing approaches to advancing nursing education by integrating informatics into curricula, initiating national, provincial, and institutional level capacity-building programs, and building a supportive environment within the context is suggested to empower nurses with sufficient digital health capacity.

Keywords: capacity, digital health, factors, nurses



OP2.6: INC042

NURSES' ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE TOWARDS POSTOPERATIVE PAIN MANAGEMENT AT COLOMBO NORTH TEACHING HOSPITAL - RAGAMA

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Introduction: Pain is a universal experience, and effective postoperative pain management is crucial for quality care, optimal clinical outcomes, and patient satisfaction. Inadequate pain relief can lead to complications, increased readmission rates, prolonged hospital stays, and higher medical costs. Nurses play a vital role in pain assessment and management, and their knowledge and attitudes significantly impact patient outcomes.

Aims and Objectives: To assess the knowledge and attitudes of nurses regarding postoperative pain management at Colombo North Teaching Hospital (CNTH), Ragama.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 157 nurses working at surgical and special units in CNTH Ragama. Data were collected using a self-administered and validated, Nurse's Knowledge and Attitudes Survey Regarding Pain Scale (Ferrell and McCaffery, 2002). The frequencies and percentages described the data, while chi-square tests examined associations between variables. SPSS v25.0 was used for data analysis.

Results: The majority of participants (40.8%) were aged 31-40 years, and 88.5% were female. Most nurses held a diploma (72%), with 27.4% having a bachelor's degree. Experience ranged from 5 months to 30 years. Notably, 84.7% had never participated in pain management training. Majority (n=88, 56.1%) of nurses had fair knowledge and attitudes, 35% (n=55) had poor knowledge and attitudes, and only 8.9% (n=14) had good knowledge and attitudes. Chi-square analysis indicated no significant association between knowledge and demographic factors, experience, or pain management training in this population.

Conclusion: Findings emphasize the need for improved educational efforts to enhance nurses' knowledge and attitudes in pain management. The lack of pain management training among the majority of participants highlights a concerning gap in continuing education. To enhance the knowledge and attitudes of nurses toward postoperative pain management, it is recommended that regular, mandatory pain management training programs be implemented. Additionally, incorporating pain management modules into nursing curricula and ongoing professional development could bridge the knowledge gap.

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitudes, Postoperative Pain Management, Nurses



OP2.7: INC043

FAMILIARITY WITH DIGITAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES AND THEIR APPLICATIONS AMONG NURSING OFFICERS AT COLOMBO SOUTH TEACHING HOSPITAL(CSTH), SRI LANKA

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Background: Education and health care are transforming rapidly with digital technologies globally. As the backbone of healthcare, nurses would be capable of utilizing digital technologies in nursing practice. However, the literature highlights that this area has received minimal attention in the Sri Lankan context.

Objective: This study aimed to determine the familiarity of digital health technologies among nurses at CSTH, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 274 nurses using simple random sampling. Data were collected utilizing a pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire developed through an extensive literature review. A five-point Likert scale consisting of 15 items was used to assess familiarity. Higher scores on the scale preferred higher familiarity indicating familiar (> 70%), moderately familiar (41%-70%), and unfamiliar (< 40%). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS version 26. Ethical approval was obtained from the ethics review committee at KIU (KIU_ERC_23_211) and CSTH(No.2048).

Results: The majority (n=234, 85.4%) were female and 62.4% of them (n=171) belonged to the 20-30 age category. More than half (67.2%, n=184) had experience between 1-5 years and 65% of them (n=178) had a basic nursing diploma as their highest professional qualification. Less than half (42.0%, n=115) were familiar with digital health technologies while 44.5% (n=122) were moderately familiar and 13.5% (n= 37) were unfamiliar. Moreover, using electronic Intra Venus (IV) monitors (78.1%, n=214), portable digital devices (74.8%, n=205), and mobile Health (mHealth) (54.3%, n=146) were the most familiar aspects for nurses in nursing practice. However, nurses had a low familiarity with Electronic Health Records (HER) (32.1%, n=88) and telehealth applications (45.6%, n=125) in practice while having low familiarity with video conferencing (44.9%, n=123). Additionally, no association was found ($p > 0.05$) between sociodemographic characteristics and levels of familiarity with digital health.

Conclusion: In conclusion, nurses expressed low familiarity with digital health technologies. Therefore, nursing educators and relevant policymakers should pay attention to developing strategies to enhance these aspects. Addressing these gaps through targeted training and education could enhance the overall familiarity with digital health.

Keywords: digital technology, education, nursing, practice



OP3.1: INC006

THE PREVALENCE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS RELATED TO THE EXCESSIVE USAGE OF DIGITAL SCREENS IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN THREE SELECTED DIVISIONAL SECRETARIES IN SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Excessive digital screen usage in pre-school children is associated with numerous health issues as ages 3-5 years are vital for cognitive development. WHO's recommended screen time for this age category is one hour per day.

Objective: To assess the prevalence of excessive screen usage and its associated factors in preschool children in three selected divisional secretaries in Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted on preschool children from Athuraliya, Madampe & Maharagama divisional secretaries. The ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo. Data were gathered from parents (n=422) using a pretested, interviewer-administered questionnaire covering demographic data, associated factors and prevalence. Independent sample t-test and Spearman's rank tests were performed on the data and analysis was performed using SPSS version 20.

Results: An equal gender distribution was observed in the sample. Thirty point one percent (30.1%) less than one hour, 27.3% one to two hours, 17.3% two to four hours, and 19% over four hours respectively spent on screens daily and 6.4% did not use screen devices. Television was the most popular device (79.8%) and the most watched content (87.2%) was cartoons. By using and Spearman's rank and independent t/test significant positive correlations were found between daily screen usage and factors such as screen usage by the mother (p= 0.002), the father (p= 0.013) ,Being in rural/suburban/urban area (p=0.001) and negative correlations were found to the child's initial exposure age to digital media (p= 0.001), Outdoor playing time (p= 0.043), time spent with the mother (p= 0.000), (p < 0.05).

Conclusion: The majority of preschool children in the study exceeded the WHO's recommended screen time of one hour per day in Athuraliya, Maharagama, Madampe areas which is associated with the child's initial exposure age, being in rural/suburban/urban area, time spent with the mother and parents' screen usage. The study underscores the need for increased parental awareness and interventions to manage screen time among preschool children.

Keywords: Excessive screen usage, preschool children, screen addiction



AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION OF SPIRITUAL CARE AMONGST STUDENT NURSES IN SELECTED COLLEGES OF NURSING - WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Spiritual care is considered a significant element of holistic care, as it helps fulfill the intangible spiritual requirements of a patient who requires support. Student nurses can provide spiritual care for patients and enhance their overall health.

Objective: To determine the level of spiritual care awareness and perception amongst student nurses at colleges of nursing in the Western Province, Sri Lanka

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted amongst nursing students (n= 333) using a systematic randomized sample of 333 second-year student nurses from Colombo, Kandana, from 03 nursing colleges (Colombo, Kandana and Kalutara). A researcher-developed, content validated 14-item instrument was used to measure spiritual care awareness (Cronbach alpha = 0.701), and content validated 35-item spiritual caregiving scale (Measure perception) was utilized (Cronbach alpha = 0.981). The study was registered under ERC/2023/023 of the Ethics Review Committee of the Open University of Sri Lanka. Descriptive statistics were employed for identifying the awareness level and perception level of student nurses using SPSS version 01.

Results: The majority of the sample comprised female students (n=302, 90.7%), with a mean age of 25.02 (± 1.06) years. The observed spiritual awareness score was 10.65(± 1.79) (moderate spiritual awareness), with similar means for both genders. The spiritual caregiving score (SCGS) of the sample was 163.42 (± 21.37), 4.66 (± 0.61), indicating a moderate level. Males (n=31) had a lower mean score (161.35) than female students (n=301, 163.63). Among the five attributes, "spirituality perspectives, spiritual care values, defining spiritual care, spiritual care attitudes and, attributes of spiritual care" of the SCGS, "perceived spirituality" earned the highest mean score of 4.89 (± 0.93), while "spiritual care values" had the lowest mean score of 4.491 (± 1.12).

Conclusions: The spiritual care awareness and their perception of spiritual care were at moderate levels. Further research should be conducted in the area of spiritual care in nursing, and more educational interventions should be implemented to improve student nurses' spiritual awareness.

Keywords: Spiritual awareness, spiritual caregiving, Nursing Students



KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND PRACTICES TOWARDS HUMAN PAPILOMAVIRUS (HPV) INFECTION, CERVICAL CANCER, AND HPV VACCINATION AMONG ANTENATAL CLINIC ATTENDEES IN THE HOMAGAMA MOH AREA, SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection is a prevalent sexually transmitted infection worldwide, with cervical cancer being the most common associated carcinoma. Cervical cancer can be prevented by HPV vaccination and cervical screening by the pap smear test. However, inadequate knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding HPV infection and cervical cancer can significantly increase morbidity and mortality rates.

Objective: To assess the knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding HPV infection, cervical cancer, and HPV vaccination among antenatal clinic attendees in the Homagama MOH area, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional, quantitative study was conducted among 379 antenatal clinic attendees in the Homagama MOH area, Sri Lanka, from August 2023 to April 2024 using a validated, pretested investigator-developed interviewer-administered questionnaire. Participants were selected using the stratified simple random sampling technique. Descriptive analyses performed using SPSS version 27.0 software to obtain percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Results: The majority of participants (43.3%;n=164) were in the 25-30 years age group, 96.6% (n=366) were Sinhala, and 95% (n=360) were Buddhist. The study found that 82% (n=311), 31.1% (n=118), and 69.1% (n=262) had poor knowledge about HPV infection, cervical cancer and HPV vaccination, respectively. Overall, 75.7% (n=287) had poor knowledge in all three areas. Meanwhile, 68.9% (n=261), 62.8% (n=238), and 80.2% (n=304) showed moderate attitudes towards HPV infection, cervical cancer and HPV vaccination respectively. Overall, 84.7% (n=321) demonstrated moderate attitudes towards all three areas. Moreover, 94.2% had poor practices related to HPV infection, cervical cancer, and HPV vaccination, with only 12.4% (n=47) having undergone the Pap smear test and 5.2% (n=20) having received the HPV vaccine.

Conclusions: The study found poor knowledge, moderate attitudes, and poor practices regarding HPV infection, cervical cancer, and HPV vaccination among antenatal clinic attendees in the Homagama MOH area, Sri Lanka, highlighting the need for enhanced health education to improve knowledge, attitudes, and practices.

Key Words: HPV infection, cervical cancer, knowledge, attitudes, practice



ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND BODY IMAGE SATISFACTION AMONG PATIENTS DIAGNOSED WITH CUTANEOUS LEISHMANIASIS IN A SELECTED HOSPITAL IN ANURADHAPURA DISTRICT, SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Cutaneous leishmaniasis, a prevalent vector-borne disease transmitted by sand fly bites, poses significant health challenges globally, with sporadic cases documented in regions in Sri Lanka as well. Beyond its physical manifestations, cutaneous leishmaniasis can profoundly impact patients' mental health, leading to changes in levels of anxiety and depression and body image satisfaction.

Objective: To assess the anxiety, depression, and body image satisfaction among patients diagnosed with cutaneous leishmaniasis in teaching Hospital in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among the total of 73 patients diagnosed with cutaneous leishmaniasis. They recruited from the skin clinic at Teaching Hospital Anuradhapura using convenience sampling technique. Data were collected through validated interviewer-administered questionnaires, Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS), and the Body Image Satisfaction Rating Scale. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 25, incorporating descriptive and inferential techniques.

Results: The majority were males (60.27%, n=44), and the mean age (SD) was 49 (3) years. The mean score of body image satisfaction was 5.92 (0.71) indicating that majority of participants were very dissatisfied with their body image (97.3% n=71). The mean score for depression was 11.49 (2.45). The participants had moderate to severe and mild levels of depression, with 63% (and 30.14% of prevalence respectively. The mean score for anxiety was 12.95 ± 2.78 and 79.5% (n=58) of the participants had moderate to severe level of anxiety. There was a significant weak negative correlation with body image satisfaction and level of depression (p=0.026, r=0.259) and anxiety (p=0.023, r= -0.266) indicating lower level of body image satisfaction leads to higher level of depression and anxiety among patients with leishmaniasis.

Conclusion/s: The study revealed that the patients with cutaneous leishmaniasis have a predominantly high level of depression and anxiety while they are dissatisfied with their body image. Body image satisfaction is closely linked with depression and anxiety, underscoring the importance of addressing psychological well-being in patients with leishmaniasis.

Keywords: Body image, satisfaction, depression, anxiety, lieshmaniasis



AMONG PATIENTS WITH CKD ATTENDING NEPHROLOGY CLINIC IN A SELECTED HOSPITAL IN SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is a growing health concern, significantly impacting patients' quality of life and dietary habits. Understanding the nutritional status and dietary patterns of CKD patients is crucial for optimizing their treatment and health outcomes.

Objective: The study aimed to assess dietary patterns and its associated factors among the patients with CKD attending nephrology clinic in a Selected Hospital, in Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional design was conducted among conveniently selected (n=145) CKD patients who were attending the nephrology clinic at Teaching Hospital, Badulla. A researcher-developed, pre-tested (n=10) interviewer administered questionnaire was used to collect data. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 25. Descriptive Statistics such as frequencies, means and standard deviation were used to describe the characteristics of the sample and inferential statistics were used to assess the associations between variables. Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from Ethics Review Committee at KAATSU International University (KIU/ERC/24/167).

Results: The mean age was 56.67 ± 14.27 years and ages ranged from 25-89 years old. The higher proportion were male (61.5%, n=91), sinhalese (50.3%, n=72), and educated up to O/L (49.3%, n=70). A significant proportion of individuals (37.2%, n=55) have been diagnosed with end-stage renal failure with the majority receiving hemodialysis treatment (54.2%, n=78). Fifty one percent of the sample (n=73) was in overweight while 33% was in normal BMI and 15% was obese. A significant proportion of the patients presented with low hemoglobin levels (53.3%, n=80). Considering the dietary patterns, (53.9%, n=76) of the individuals adhered to a non-vegetarian diet. The majority consumed three meals per day: breakfast (83%, n=140), lunch (87%, n=133), and dinner (82.2%, n=122). There was statistically significant, association between duration of the CKD ($p=0.043$) and education level ($p=0.04$) with the dietary patterns at the 95% confidence interval.

Conclusion: The study reveals that many CKD patients are overweight or obese, have low hemoglobin levels, and adhere to a non-vegetarian diet. It is recommended to implement targeted nutritional interventions and educational programs to improve the dietary habits and overall health outcomes of CKD patients.

Keywords: Dietary Patterns, Associated Factors, Chronic Kidney Disease, Patients, Nephrology Clinic



OP3.6: INC039

THE PREVALENCE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS OF DIABETIC PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY AMONG PATIENTS ATTENDING TO THE DIABETIC CLINIC IN TEACHING HOSPITAL KARAPITIYA, SRILANKA

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Introduction: Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a significant global health issue that can lead to various complications. Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy (DPN) is a prevalent and debilitating complication among individuals with diabetes mellitus, characterized by nerve damage that leads to sensory and motor deficits. This study aimed to assess the prevalence and associated factors for DPN among patients attending the diabetic clinic at Teaching Hospital Karapitiya (THK).

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted using convenience sampling among 345 diabetic patients attending the diabetic clinic at THK. Data were collected using an interviewer-administered questionnaire, which included the Michigan Neuropathy Screening Instrument (MNSI) and clinical factors of the patients. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the sample characteristics, and the Chi-Square Test was used to determine associations between variables. ERC approval was received from KIU ERC (KIU/ERC/23/074) and further approval was taken from Hospital director and consultant endocrinologist of the clinic.

Results: The majority of the respondents were female (62.1%, n=215), Sinhala (97.7%, n=338), Married (96%, n=332) with type II DM (98.8%, n=342). The mean age was 58.8±9.96 years, 14.5% (n=50) were smokers and 25.1% (n=87) were Alcohol consumers. MNSI scores revealed that 34.1% (n=118) of patients were positive for DPN (Score greater than 2 points on a 10-point scale for the clinical portion of the MNSI). Significant associations were observed between DPN and the fasting blood sugar (p=0.031), HbA1c (p=0.001), triglycerides (p=0.008), and high-density lipoprotein levels (p=0.021). Additionally, having hypertension (p<0.000) and dyslipidemia (p=0.004) were significantly associated with DPN.

Conclusion: The findings highlight the need for routine screening for early detection of DPN, enhanced diabetes management programs to maintain optimal glycemic levels, and importance of patient education on regular blood sugar monitoring and lifestyle modifications. Implementing these measures can help lessen the burden of DPN and improve patient outcomes.

Keywords: Diabetes Mellitus, Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy, Factors, Prevalence



SPOUSAL SUPPORT ASSOCIATED WITH PRIMI MOTHERS' SATISFACTION DURING PREGNANCY: A STUDY IN TISSAMAHARAMA MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH (MOH) AREA

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Introduction: Satisfaction in primiparous mothers during pregnancy significantly impacts both maternal well-being and neonatal growth, especially in the psychosocial development of neonates. This period of maternal satisfaction cannot be underestimated. Among the various sources of support needed by pregnant mothers, spousal support has been identified as a major factor influencing primiparous mothers' satisfaction during pregnancy.

Objective: To examine the different types of spousal support associated with primiparous mothers' satisfaction during pregnancy.

Methods: This quantitative cross-sectional study involved a sample of 205 (n=205) primiparous mothers selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected using a researcher-developed, pretested questionnaire, which was informed by existing literature and validated by experts. Satisfaction among primiparous mothers was measured across five dimensions related to spousal support using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from very dissatisfied (1) to very satisfied (5). The dimensions included emotional support, support for new motherhood, spiritual support, and support for physical well-being. The study was conducted in the Tissamaharama MOH area, covering 20 maternity clinics. Data analysis was performed using descriptive and inferential statistics with SPSS version 26. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of the National Institute of Health Sciences, Kalutara.

Results: The study found that spiritual support ($p < 0.000$), emotional support ($p < 0.001$), and support for physical well-being ($p < 0.001$) from spouses were positively and significantly associated with primiparous mothers' satisfaction. However, support for new motherhood ($p = 0.160$) did not show a significant relationship with satisfaction.

Conclusions: The findings highlight the importance of spousal spiritual, emotional, and physical support for the satisfaction of pregnant primiparous mothers. These insights suggest that healthcare providers should develop interventions to enhance these aspects of spousal support to improve maternal satisfaction during pregnancy. Further research is recommended to explore additional factors influencing primiparous mothers' satisfaction.

Keywords: Primi Mothers, Spousal Support, Satisfaction, Pregnancy



IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON BEHAVIORAL CHANGES AMONG ADOLESCENTS ATTENDING CHILD GUIDED CLINIC IN DISTRICT GENERAL HOSPITAL, HAMBANTOTA

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Introduction: Social media leads to health-threatening behaviors that harm the well-being of addicted individuals. Though understanding the impact of social media on adolescents' behavioral changes has become a priority due to the increase in mental health problems around the globe, relevant evidence is lacking in the local context.

Objective: To determine the impact of social media usage on behavioral changes of adolescents attending the Child Guided Clinic in District General Hospital, Hambantota.

Methods: This was a descriptive cross-sectional study. Data were collected from a convenience sample of parents or guardians of adolescents (n=181) using a pre-tested self-administered questionnaire. It comprises questions gathering information regarding the socio-demographic characteristics of participants, social media usage, and behavioral changes of adolescents. Behavioral changes were determined by close-ended questions on wasting time (4 items), imitating behavior (4 items), mobile phone ownership (3 items), and drifting away questions (8 items) measured on a Likert scale (strongly agree - strongly disagree). Descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney U test, and Kruskal-Wallis tests were performed. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of the National Hospital of Sri Lanka, Colombo.

Results: The questionnaire was completed by the mother (n=122), father (n=25), or guardian (n=34), and most of them attended the clinic with adolescents between 10-13 years old (44.8%). Most adolescents had used 1-3 social media platforms and mainly logged in to YouTube (55.8%) and Facebook (34.8%). Forty five percent of the participants had spent one hour (45.3%), or 2 to 3 hours (39.2%) on social media daily. Social media had been used for entertaining (40.3%), learning (32%), or connecting with friends (14.9%). There were associations between the number of social media platform usage and behavioral changes determined by four areas; wasting time, imitating behavior, mobile phone ownership, and drifting away (p<0.05). Similar associations were observed between the number of hours (p<0.001) and frequency (p<0.001) of using social media. Social media usage was not associated with parent/guardian income or living area (p>0.05)

Conclusions: Findings of this study revealed that adolescents use social media considerably and mostly for non-learning purposes. Their behavioral changes are linked to the number, duration, and frequency of social media usage. Since the extent of social media usage influences adolescents' well-being, parents/guardians need to take appropriate strategies to minimize its usage. Further research is warranted.

Keywords: Adolescents, behavioral changes, impact, social-media usage



OP4.3: INC010

ATTITUDES AMONG THE MOTHERS REGARDING THE ORAL HEALTH OF THEIR CHILDREN: A HOSPITAL-BASED STUDY

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Introduction: The prevalence of dental caries among Sri Lankan children is eye-opening and highlighted as a health priority. Dental caries is preventable through proper oral health care practices. Mothers' attitudes towards oral health can significantly influence their children's oral hygiene.

Objective: To determine mothers' attitudes and the associated factors toward the children's oral health of children (<12 years) attending the Dental Clinic in Teaching Hospital Karapitiya, Sri Lanka.

Method: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted with conveniently selected 421 mothers of children <12 years. Participants' socio-demographic characteristics and their attitudes on oral health were assessed. Data were collected using a pre-tested, self-administered questionnaire comprising 15 questions measuring on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (0) to strongly agree (5). Attitude was categorized as positive or negative considering the mean score of attitudes. Descriptive statistics and Kruskal-Wallis tests were performed. Significance was accepted at $p < 0.05$. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of the Open University of Sri Lanka.

Results: Of the total ($n=421$), most mothers studied up to O/L (32.3%) or A/L (47.3%) and had one (21.4%) or two children (67.8%). Most of the children were between 3-5 years (53.7%) or 6-12 years (30.9%). Forty-five percent of mothers were unemployed and others were employed (34.9%) or self-employed (20%). More than 60% of mothers agree with the statement that 'deciduous teeth require good care and 37.3% of mothers agree with the statement that 'cleaning of child's teeth should be guided by the parents/guardian'. Forty-five percent agree with the statement that 'mothers should be alert to the signs of dental diseases of the child while 47% disagree with the statement. Overall mean \pm SD attitude score was 42.29 ± 16.52 (median=42.00). Half of the sample's attitude toward oral health was negative (51.1%). Mothers' attitude was significantly associated with their educational level, employment status, family monthly income, number of children, children's age, and knowledge-obtaining sources ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: An average proportion of mothers who participated in the study did not show favorable attitudes toward the oral health of their children. Therefore, improving mothers' attitudes towards oral health through preschool and school health programmes is essential.

Keywords: Oral health, children, mothers, attitudes, associated factors



OP4.4: INC017

KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES TOWARDS FOOT SELF-CARE AMONG PATIENTS WITH DIABETES MELLITUS ATTENDING ALL BASE HOSPITALS IN COLOMBO DISTRICT

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Introduction: Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is one of the most common health problems worldwide. Diabetic foot is a serious and disabling complication of DM that consists of lesions in the deep tissues resulting in lower extremity amputations. The incidence of diabetic foot ulcers has increased due to poor knowledge and practice of diabetic foot self-care.

Objective: To assess the knowledge and practices towards foot self-care and its associated factors among patients with DM attending diabetic clinics at all Base Hospitals in Colombo District, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 423 participants selected using systematic random sampling. Data were collected by using a validated and pre-tested interviewer-administered questionnaire. Knowledge and practice level was categorized as good, moderate and poor. Descriptive and inferential analysis were performed using SPSS. V (26). A p-value < 0.05 was considered significant.

Results: Majority of the participants (71.2%) were females. Only 22.5% of the participants showed a good level of knowledge regarding foot self-care. Females had a significantly higher mean knowledge score [60.5 (\pm 19.7)] than males [55.4 (\pm 23.7)] ($p= 0.03$). Further, the patients attending the diabetic clinic at the District General Hospital Awissawella showed a significantly higher mean knowledge score compared to those at other hospitals (ANOVA, $p=0.01$). Nearly 28% of the participants had good practice levels related to diabetic foot care.

Conclusions: One-third of the patients had poor knowledge regarding foot self-care while more than half of the study participants had only satisfactory practice. There is an urgent need for enhancing knowledge and practices to reduce further complications of foot ulcers.

Keywords: Diabetes Mellitus, Foot self-care, Knowledge, Practice, Associated factors



PREVALENCE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS OF POLYPHARMACY AMONG THE ELDERLY IN CARE HOMES IN COLOMBO DISTRICT, SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Polypharmacy is the concurrent use of five or more medications, emerging as a critical healthcare concern among the elderly, increasing their vulnerability to both multimorbidity and adverse drug reactions.

Objective: This study aimed to determine the prevalence and associated factors of polypharmacy, with focusing on cardiovascular-specific polypharmacy among the elderly, residing in elderly homes in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted among 373 residents (aged >60 years) from 10 elderly care homes in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Proportionate stratified sampling with an interviewer-administered pre-validated questionnaire and checklist was employed. The Charlson Comorbidity Index (CCI) was employed to assess different comorbidities. The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 27.0 and chi-square test, student t-test, and One way ANOVA employed, considering $p < 0.05$ as the level of significance.

Results: Mean age of the participants was 74.74 ± 7.56 , and 75.1% were female. Prevalence of polypharmacy was 59%, including 10.5% of excessive polypharmacy (≥ 10 drugs). The mean count of medications per patient was 5.50 ± 2.98 . Oral blood glucose-lowering drugs were the most prescribed medication group (60.9%) followed by lipid-modifying agents (58.2%). Significant associations were found between polypharmacy and contact with general practitioner ($p < 0.001$), hospitalization within the past 12 months ($p < 0.001$), past surgical history ($p = 0.004$), number of past medical conditions ($p < 0.001$), family history of any disease ($p = 0.008$), family history of cardiovascular disease ($p < 0.05$) and CCI score ($p < 0.001$). Among the participants, 20.9% had cardiovascular-specific polypharmacy which was associated with abnormal body mass index ($p = 0.018$), hospitalization within the past 12 months ($p < 0.001$), presence of chronic illnesses ($p < 0.001$), family history of cardiovascular disease ($p = 0.014$) and CCI score ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: This study highlights a pronounced prevalence of polypharmacy and cardiovascular specific polypharmacy among the elderly, residing in care homes in Colombo, associated with clinical characteristics and multimorbidity.

Keywords: elderly, medication, polypharmacy, cardiovascular-specific polypharmacy, associated factors



Technical Session – Poster Presentations



PP1.1: INC022

ATTITUDES TOWARDS SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AMONG EXPECTED MOTHERS AND THEIR PARTNERS DURING THE ANTENATAL PERIOD IN KATANA MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AREA

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Introduction: Addressing attitudes towards sexual and reproductive health during pregnancy is crucial, given the myriad concerns and changes it brings to sexual life, including discomfort and fear of complications. Yet, research on this topic remains sparse, especially in Sri Lanka.

Objective: To assess attitudes towards sexual and reproductive health among expected mothers and their partners in the Katana Medical Officer of Health area during the antenatal period.

Methods: A descriptive, cross-sectional study was undertaken among 206 pair of expected mothers and their partners who visited nine antenatal clinics within the Katana MOH area from May to July 2023. Data were gathered using a pre-tested, interviewer-administered questionnaire. Privacy of the participants was ensured by selecting appropriate locations within the clinics for data collection. Data was analyzed using SPSS-25 version. Descriptive statistics and chi-square test were used to analyze the data.

Results: The study group comprised 206 pregnant women and their spouses, with a mean (SD) age of 29.5 (4.5) years. Most participants were Sinhalese (89.1%) and had education up to Ordinary Level (25.5%). Three-quarters (75.9%) were employed, with an average monthly family income between Rs 11,000-50,000. Nearly half (44.9%) of the pregnant mothers were in their third trimester. A majority (42.2%) believed sexual activity wouldn't harm pregnancy, while 38.8% thought it may cause miscarriages. Additionally, 47.1% mentioned sexual position affect the health health of the fetus. Gender and employment status significantly influenced participants' attitudes ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusions: According to the scoring system the attitudes towards sexual and reproductive health among expected mothers and their partners were in 'Poor' level. Recommended to underscore the importance facts of enhancing education of sexual and reproductive health at MOH centers.

Key Words: Attitudes, Pregnant women, Spouses, Antenatal period



PROCRASTINATION AMONG NURSING STUDENTS IN SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Procrastination refers to voluntarily delaying an intended course of action despite knowing that the delay will exacerbate circumstances. It is a common problem among students that may lead to negative impacts on their academic performance.

Objective: this study mainly focused on assess the level of procrastination among nursing students in Sri Lanka and determine the causes of procrastination.

Methods: data collection was done among 260 participants. A cross-sectional study was conducted by using an online questionnaire circulated through social media platforms. The pre-tested questionnaire consisted of a sociodemographic sector and a statement section to assess procrastination behaviors. The statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS V28) was used to analyze the data and provide a 95% confidence interval. The cut-off p-value was set at <0.05, and 50% of the predetermined cut-off value was used to categorize the level of procrastination.

Results: Among 260 participants, 85% (n = 221) were female, 14.2% (n = 37) were male, and 0.8% (n = 2) preferred not to disclose their gender. Most (82.7%, n = 215) were nursing students from private institutions. Distribution by academic year was as follows: first-year (54.2%), second-year (28.5%), third-year (15%), and fourth-year (1.9%). Regarding procrastination, 33.8% agreed, and 5.8% strongly agreed, that they delay assignments until the deadline, and 41.9% agreed, and 1.9% strongly agreed, that they intentionally delay starting work. Additionally, 47.3% preferred submitting assignments early. A majority (97.7%) exhibited high procrastination levels.

Conclusions: The findings demonstrate that procrastination is a major problem among Sri Lankan nursing students. Procrastination behaviors are caused by a variety of factors including delaying assignments, lack of a peaceful study environment, and using social media frequently. To improve nursing students' academic performance, these problems need to be addressed through focused intervention and support systems.

Keywords: Procrastination, Nursing Students, Academic Performance, Sri Lanka, Higher Education



TREATMENT ADHERENCE AMONG PATIENTS DIAGNOSED WITH HYPOTHYROIDISM: A HOSPITAL-BASED CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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Background: Hypothyroidism is a disorder of the endocrine system in which the thyroid gland doesn't produce enough thyroid hormones. It cannot be cured, and most patients have it for a lifetime. Oral thyroxine (Levothyroxine) is a common drug for use to treat hypothyroidism. Non-adherence to treatments leads to serious health outcomes and increased healthcare cost.

Objective: To assess the treatment adherence and factors associated with non-adherent to treatment of patients diagnosed with hypothyroidism attending to endocrinology clinic in Teaching Hospital-Karapitiya.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among the patients who attended the endocrinology clinic diagnosed with hypothyroidism for more than three months, using convenience sampling method. Data were obtained from 359 participants through an interviewer-administered pre-tested questionnaire which included socio-demographic data and treatment adherence based questions. The level of treatment adherence was assessed by using number of doses missed within one month. The adherence level was categorized into non-adherent (missed ≥ 5 doses), moderately adherent (missed $3 \leq 5$ doses) and adherent (missed 0-3 doses). Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS version 26.0.

Results: Most of the participants were females (89.7%) and they (31.5%) belonged to the age group 41-50 years. The 69.9% of the participants were not missed even one dose in last month. 13.1% were missed 1 to 2 doses, 12.5% were missed 3 to 4 doses in the last month. 7.5% participants were missed more than five doses. Most of the participants (79.9%) were adherent to treatment of hypothyroidism, 12.5% participants were moderately adherent and remaining 7.5% participants were non adherent to treatment of hypothyroidism. The mean score on treatment adherence was 1.61 and standard deviation (SD) was 0.971. Among non-adherence patients, 92.6% of the patients had missed the doses due to forgetfulness, 37 % due to carelessness, 44.4% due to economic problems

Conclusion: According to the results, the majority of patients were adhered to the treatments. Among the non-adherent participants, majority of them missed doses due to forgetfulness. Doctors and Nurses can play the main role to improve patients' adherence to treatment and increasing the availability of leaflets and health education sessions in clinic setup may be effective.

Keywords: Hypothyroidism, Treatment Adherence, Patients



PP1.4: INC029

HEALTHCARE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Introduction: Artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionized the healthcare sector by enhancing the diagnosis, treatment, and management of diseases. It is crucial to identify how healthcare students knowledge and perception about AI since they are going to start using these instruments in their practice soon.

Objective(s): To understand Healthcare Students' Perceptions and Knowledge of Artificial Intelligence

Methods: A cross-sectional study was carried out on 375 healthcare students from an institution. The study was conducted using a simple random sampling method based on the students' index numbers, and a pretested and content validated questionnaire was administered among healthcare students in the institution. A survey was conducted for collecting basic sociodemographic information of participants and 21-items Likert-scale tool for evaluating their knowledge and Perception towards AI. Descriptive statistics were performed on the data using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences v26, using frequencies and percentiles.

Results: The participants' age was also diverse, but the biggest number of participants (33.7%) were 20-21 years old. For gender, 20.8% of the participants were male (n = 78), while 70.7% of participants were female (n = 265) and the remaining 4.3% of participants (n = 16) did not want to disclose their gender. Of the total participants by healthcare disciplines, 66.4% (n = 249) were in nursing programmes, 8.36% (n= 30) were in physiotherapy programmes, 22.28% (n=80) were in biomedical programmes. The level of qualification was diploma in 43.5% (n = 163) and higher diploma in 27.7 % (n = 104). Regarding the year of study, the majority of the participants (n=237; 63.2%) were in their first year of study. 73.1% (n = 274) reported familiarity with AI, while 59.2% (n = 222) could provide a basic definition. 51.7% (n = 194) noted encounters with AI applications in healthcare, and 73.3% (n = 275) were aware of the potential benefits of integrating AI into healthcare practices. However, 63.7% (n = 239) understood the ethical implications, and 56.5% (n = 212) were confident in their knowledge of AI's risks and limitations. For 42.1% (n = 158), educational activities positively influenced AI understanding.

Conclusions: The findings indicate a high level of knowledge and perception usefulness of AI amongst the healthcare students. According to the results, the study reveals a high awareness of AI among a diverse group of participants, where 70% of them recognize the benefit in healthcare. Despite the notable gap in understanding AI's ethical implications and risks, the findings recommend focusing on integrating AI with healthcare education.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Healthcare, Healthcare Education, Student Perceptions, Technological Advancements



PERCEPTIONS OF AI-DRIVEN PERSONALIZED STUDY PLANS AMONG NURSING STUDENTS OF A SELECTED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTE

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Introduction: The integration of Artificial Intelligent (AI) driven personalized study plans in education is gaining traction. Despite these concerns, understanding the perceptions of nursing students towards this technology remains underexplored.

Objective(s): This study aims to assess the perceptions of AI-driven personalized study plans among nursing students of a selected higher education institute.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted with 170 nursing students (n=170) at diploma and undergraduate educational levels from the International Institute of Health Sciences, Sri Lanka. Participants from afore mentioned sampling frame were selected using a simple random sampling method to ensure representative coverage of the population. Data were collected using a validated questionnaire in the local settings and was structured with demographic information, frequency of AI technology usage, and perceptions towards personalized study plans and AI integration. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS v27).

Results: The sample comprised of 70.6% female (n=120), 29.4% male (n=50) nursing students who are currently enrolled in. The majority (n=143, 84.1%) of the respondents were single, with 37.6% (n=64) holding a higher diploma and 36.5% (n=62) a bachelor's degree, reflecting to satisfactory educational qualifications. AI technology was used daily by 44.7% (n=76) and weekly by 41.2% (n=70). Personalized study plans were utilized by 68.2% (n=116) of students who were also concerned about their data privacy, with 85.3% (n=145) reporting of improved learning. Most students (70.6%, n=120) found these plans effective, and 81.2% (n=138) were open to AI enhancements. Additionally, 71.8% (n=122) agreed on the academic advantages of AI-integrated plans and real-time AI feedback. Comfort with using personal academic data was high (58.8%, n=100 very comfortable), and 71.8% (n=122) felt confident using AI-driven platforms.

Conclusion: Nursing students show a positive perception towards AI-driven personalized study plans, acknowledging their potential to improve academic performance. Nonetheless, there are concerns about data privacy, highlighting the obligation to boost student's confidence in using AI technologies.

Keywords: AI-driven technology, personalized study plans, nursing students, educational technology, student perceptions



KNOWLEDGE ON HAND HYGIENE MEASURES AMONG FOOD HANDLERS IN KOGGALA FREE TRADE ZONE

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Introduction: Foodborne illnesses pose a significant public health risk, and food handlers play a crucial role in their prevention. Proper hand hygiene practices are essential to minimize contamination and ensure food safety and knowledge is an essential factor that influences the behavior of food handlers towards hand hygiene measures. The Koggala Free Trade Zone (KFTZ) is the home for significant amount of working people. As such, it is critical to maintain high food safety standards to prevent the spread of foodborne illnesses.

Objective: This study mainly aims to assess the knowledge of food handlers in the KFTZ about standard hand hygiene practices and their importance for food safety.

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted among 70 food handlers employed in various cafeterias within the KFTZ. Data were collected using a self-prepared interviewer-administered questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample. Level of knowledge was decided based on an in-house categorization scoring system.

Results: Most food handlers had a good knowledge level about hand hygiene measures and associated safety concerns (51.4%). 47.1% had a moderate knowledge level. However, 65.7% of respondents either gave incorrect responses or needed to know that hand hygiene is one key step in five key steps for food safety according to the World Health Organization. Similarly, 71.4% of the respondents need to know the correct hand washing time duration. Furthermore, 64.3% of the respondents agreed with the following statement: "Hand sanitisers can replace hand washing in food handling," displaying a misconception about the importance of hand washing with soap and water.

Conclusion: While most food handlers in the KFTZ demonstrated good knowledge of hand hygiene measures, there were gaps in knowledge level, particularly regarding handwashing techniques and the use of hand sanitisers. Conducting regular training and reinforcement of food safety regulations, are needed to improve hand hygiene knowledge in the KFTZ.

Keywords: Hand hygiene, Knowledge, Food Handlers



PP2.1: INC008

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND PRACTICES ON EPILEPSY MANAGEMENT AMONG STATE SECTOR FINAL YEAR DIPLOMA NURSING STUDENTS IN WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Epilepsy is a chronic, non-communicable, and one of the most prevalent neurological conditions. Since, nursing students represent a pivotal part of the future healthcare system, it's crucial to have adequate knowledge, attitudes, and practices on epilepsy for them.

Objective: This study was aimed to describe the knowledge, attitudes, and practices related epilepsy management among final year diploma nursing students in selected state sector nursing training schools in Western Province, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive cross- sectional study was conducted using 385 participants from three nursing training schools in Western province. Ethical clearance was obtained from the ERC of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo (EC-23-136). A systematic random sampling technique was applied, and a self- administered questionnaire was used for data collection. The knowledge, attitudes, and practices on epilepsy management were assessed through the questionnaire. As the analytical methods, descriptive statistics were used for the mean, standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages, and inferential statistics were used for chi-square test, independent sample T-test, and one way ANOVA test using SPSS version 27.0 software. 1 score for correct answer and 0 for incorrect were given for scoring and the total score was categorized.

Results: The majority of participants had moderate knowledge (50.3%), positive attitudes (98.2%), and satisfactory practices (90.9%) on epilepsy. They were lacking knowledge regarding activities to be avoided and medications. Only 14%(n=54) participants knew that Phenytoin was a main drug treatment for epilepsy. There were significant associations between the nursing school and knowledge, attitudes, and practices on epilepsy. Additionally, a significant association was found between the living province of participants and knowledge, attitudes, and practices on epilepsy.

Conclusion: Majority them have a moderate level of knowledge on epilepsy while the majority having positive attitudes and satisfactory practices. The results indicate the necessity of interventions to improve the knowledge on epilepsy managements.

Keywords: Attitudes, Epilepsy, knowledge, Nursing students, practices



KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES REGARDING THE PREVENTION OF THALASSEMIA AMONG PARENTS OF THALASSEMIC CHILDREN AT THE NATIONAL THALASSEMIA CENTER, KURUNEGALA, SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Thalassemia is a prevalent genetic blood disorder in Sri Lanka, particularly in the Northwestern Province, due to consanguineous marriages and inadequate preventive measures. This study aims to fill this gap by evaluating the knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to thalassemia prevention among parents of thalassemic children.

Objective: To assess the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of parents of children with thalassemia regarding disease prevention at the National Thalassemia Center in Kurunegala, Sri Lanka.

Methods: A descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted with 237 parents of children under 12 years at the Kurunegala Thalassemia Center in 2023. Data were collected using a pretested, interviewer-administered questionnaire. Knowledge was scored from 0 to 100 points. Attitudes and practices were assessed on a 5-point Likert scale, categorized as poor (<60%), moderate (60%-80%), and good (>80%). Statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, t-tests, and ANOVA, were performed using SPSS version 27.0, with significance set at <0.05.

Results: The mean age of participants was 36.5 years. Most participants (79.6%) were female. The average knowledge score was moderate at 72.42 ± 10.89 out of 100. Nearly all participants (99.1%) had satisfactory attitudes towards prevention, and 60.9% exhibited satisfactory practices. Significant determinants of knowledge included age ($p = 0.04$), education level ($p = 0.0001$), and income ($p = 0.0001$). Gender significantly affected attitudes ($p = 0.007$), with males scoring higher. Practices were significantly linked to age ($p = 0.043$) and income ($p = 0.001$).

Conclusion: The study underscores a generally satisfactory level of knowledge and positive attitudes towards thalassemia prevention among parents. Despite these strengths, there are gaps in practices, particularly concerning preventive measures. To address these gaps, there is a need for comprehensive health education sessions, targeted information dissemination, and enhanced access to genetic counseling and preventive services. Improving awareness and preventive practices among parents is crucial for reducing the burden of thalassemia.

Keywords: *Thalassemia, prevention, parental knowledge, attitudes, practices*



DOMESTIC FALLS AND INJURIES AMONG ELDERLY PATIENTS ADMITTED TO BASE HOSPITAL, THISSAMAHARAMA: A RETROSPECTIVE CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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Introduction: Falls among the elderly present significant global challenges, impacting healthcare systems and overall well-being. Understanding the contributing factors is critical for effective prevention and enhancing elderly care, thereby ensuring better quality of life outcomes globally.

Objective: This study aims to identify common injury patterns and patient management among elderly patients admitted to Base Hospital, Thissamaharama, Sri Lanka.

Methodology: Utilizing a retrospective cross-sectional approach, 310 bed-head tickets were selected by convenience sampling from admissions that occurred between February 24, 2023, and February 24, 2024. Secondary data were extracted using a pre-designed data extraction sheet consisting of 20 questions, developed by researchers with reference to scientific literature. BHTs without relevant record and under legal investigations were excluded. Data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS version 25, with results presented as descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages.

Results: Demographic characteristics revealed that out of 310 participants, 189 (61%) were male, with the most represented age group being 65-69 years (38.4%). Slippery surfaces (44.2%) and faintness (26.7%) were identified as the primary causes of injuries. The majority of admissions (42.9%) occurred within the first 20 minutes of injury. All patients (100%) complained of pain upon admission, and 33.5% reported headaches. Immediate interventions included head injury observation charts (31.9%), wound dressings (23.9%), and Plaster of Paris applications (11.9%). A significant majority of patients (97.7%) received discharge plans, with clinical follow-up being the most common (62.4%), followed by wound dressing schedules (17.4%) and suture removal dates (8.7%).

Conclusion: Slippery surfaces are the most common cause of domestic falls and injuries among the elderly population in Thissamaharama, with most admissions occurring within an acceptable time frame. Pain was the most common presenting complaint, and clinical follow-up was the most common discharge plan. The findings underscore the importance of focusing on prevention and immediate management of injuries in this population.

Keywords: Domestic falls, Elderly population, Injuries



KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS TOWARDS STOMA CARE AMONG SURGICAL NURSES IN TEACHING HOSPITALS IN COLOMBO DISTRICT

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Introduction: Stoma care is essential for postoperative recovery and patient well-being. Surgical ward nurses, being key providers of this care, need comprehensive knowledge and skills. However, research shows varying levels of stoma care knowledge and practice among nurses, often due to gaps in ongoing education and adherence to clinical guidelines, impacting patient adaptation and complication management.

Objective: To assess the knowledge, practice and associated factors towards stoma care among surgical nurses in teaching hospitals in the Colombo district.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 422 surgical ward nurses at three teaching hospitals in the Colombo district using a simple random sampling method. Data were collected via a self-administered, pretested questionnaire and descriptively analyzed to obtain percentages and frequencies and correlations were obtained through Pearson's analysis by SPSS v.26.00. This study was approved by the Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo.

Results: Out of 317 respondents (75.11%), the mean age was 33.67 ± 8.11 years. Most participants (64.7%) had a diploma in nursing, and the majority (65%) had 1-10 years of experience. The mean knowledge score towards ostomy care was 10.25 ± 1.93 , with 73.2% demonstrating good knowledge. The mean practice score was 5.92 ± 1.80 , with 71.6% showing a moderate level of practice. Age was the only factor found to have a positive correlation with practice ($r = 0.29$, $p < 0.000$), with participants aged 32-41 years showing a significantly good level of practice.

Conclusion: The study revealed that the majority of nurses demonstrated good knowledge and general practice levels towards ostomy care. Notably, age significantly influenced practice, with those aged 32-41 years exhibiting better practices. These findings suggest that targeted education programs on practical skills for younger nurses may improve care delivery.

Keywords: Stoma care, Knowledge, Practice, Surgical nurses



AWARENESS OF DENTAL FLUOROSIS AMONG PARENTS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN IN DIMBULAGALA EDUCATIONAL ZONE

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Introduction: Dental fluorosis is a major oral health problem in rural areas in Sri Lanka. There is a higher risk of dental fluorosis (DF) among school children at permanent teeth developing age and is caused by an excessive amount of fluoride exposure during enamel development. Therefore, evaluation of the knowledge, awareness on dental fluorosis among parents of school children in Dimbulagala zonal area is timely important.

Objectives: To assess the awareness of DF and associated factors among parents of school children in Dimbulagala Educational Zone.

Methods: A total of 273 parents of students were enrolled and cluster sampling method was used. Self-administrated, pre tested questionnaire was used and descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among parents of school children in Dimbulagala Educational Zone. Data Was analyzed using SPSS 25th version.

Results: The mean of the parent's age was 39.47. Age range was 30. The majority of parents [154 (56.4%)] were female and the majority of the parents' occupation was farming. [127 (46.5%)]. Most of the participants [267 (97.8%)] lived in rural areas. The majority of the parents [169 (61.9%)] didn't know whether their children are using fluoride tooth paste. 193 parents (70.7%) were not aware of the term "Dental Fluorosis". There were 158 participants (57.9%) who knew that their children are having mottled teeth and 60 of them have taken treatment for that condition. The majority of the parents [76 (27.8%)] thought that old age was the most vulnerable age group for developing DF. Most of the parents [230 (84.2%)] were not aware that fluoride was the main factor for DF. Most of the participants [122 (44.7%)] were not aware of the water sources with high fluoride concentration. There was a statistical significant association between the awareness of DF and living area ($p=0.007$) and occupation ($p=0.014$).

Conclusion/s: The majority of parents had low awareness of DF. There was a statistically significant association between the awareness of parents on DF with living area and occupation. Therefore, education program to improve their awareness of DF should be introduced.

Keywords: Dental fluorosis, Awareness, Parents



KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES OF LABOR PAIN MANAGEMENT AMONG MIDWIFERY QUALIFIED NURSES AT A SELECTED HOSPITAL IN SRI LANKA

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Introduction: Labor is a painful experience for women, starting with cervix dilation and progressing to fetal descent, causing vaginal and perineal stretching and tears. Effective pain management, incorporating both pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches, is crucial for a safe and satisfactory birth. Midwifery-qualified nurses (MQNs) are essential, needing comprehensive expertise in pain relief to ensure quality care during labor.

Objectives: To assess the knowledge and practice of labor pain management among MQNs at the German-Sri Lanka Friendship Hospital for Women (GSFHW) in Galle, Sri Lanka.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional quantitative study was conducted among 90 MQNs at GSFHW, Galle using whole sampling method. Researcher developed, pretested, self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. The ethical approval was obtained from the KIU ethics review committee (KIU/ERC/24/024). Data analyzed using SPSS v25.0.

Results: The majority of nurses were aged 35-45 years (48.3%, n=43), diploma holders (77.5%, n=69), and married (82%, n=73). Most had over 10 years of experience (29.2%, n=26) and 32.6% were currently working in the labor room (n=29). Commonly recommended pain relief methods included pethidine (37.1%, n=33) and Entonox (40.4%, n=36), with 87.6% (n=78) having knowledge of non-pharmacological methods. While all of the respondents had engaged in Pain management (100%, n=90) in clinical training only 29.2% (n=26) had received training in pain management. Overall, 84.3% of the respondents had good knowledge level and 73.0% of the respondents had good practice level.

Conclusion: MQNs at GSFHW displayed good knowledge and practice in labor pain management, likely due to their experience in labor rooms, though only 32.6% currently work there. While most nurses demonstrated good clinical practice, gaps remain in the use of pain rating scales and formal pain assessments. Targeted training programs and integrating pain management into routine clinical education could enhance nurses' competencies and improve maternal care during labor.

Keywords: Labor pain, knowledge, practice, midwifery qualified nurse



NURSES' KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE OF ORAL CARE GIVEN TO ICU PATIENTS AT NATIONAL HOSPITAL SRI LANKA

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Introduction - Oral care is a vital component of nursing care as it affects the patients' immediate well-being and long-term wellness. Specifically in the ICU set-up, where oral care is typically provided entirely by nursing staff, it is an essential factor to consider as bad breath, tooth decay, gum disease, negative influence on nutritional status and predisposition to breathing-related infections may all be avoided with good oral care.

Aims and Objectives - To assess nurses' knowledge, attitude and practice of oral care given for the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) patients at National Hospital Sri Lanka.

Methodology - A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 240 randomly selected ICU nurses of 17 ICUs at NHSL. A questionnaire developed by researchers based on available literature was pre-tested and used to collect data as a self-administered online Google form. Data analysis was done using SPSS v25.0 and chi square test was done to determine the associations.

Results: The study included 20% (n=49) males and 80% (n=191) female nurses. The majority (49.2%, n=118) were aged between 26-35 years, 42.5% (n=102) had 6-10 years of experience and 69.6% (n=167) nurses possess a diploma level education. Mean knowledge score was 26.37(SD \pm 4.54, range 7-35), mean attitude score was 26.78 SD \pm 4.92, range 7-35), mean practice score was 27.1 (SD \pm 4.33, range 7-35). Overall, 70.6% (n=207) had good knowledge, 71.7% (n=210) had Positive attitudes and 74.7% (n=219) had good practices regarding oral care. Notably, attitudes toward oral care (p=0.020) were significantly associated with the nurses' educational level.

Conclusion: The results suggest that the current level of training and experience within the nursing workforce contributes positively to the quality of patient care in this area. To further enhance the quality of oral care, it is recommended to implement continuous training programs. Further nursing education programs should emphasize oral care as part of their curriculum, especially at advanced levels of education

Keywords: Oral care, Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Nurses, Intensive Care Units



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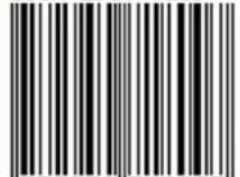
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